

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE.

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THE PETRIFIED FERN.

In a valley, centuries ago,
 Grew a little fern leaf, green and slender —
 Veining delicate, and fibres tender —
 Waving, when the wind crept down so low;
 Rushes tall, and moss, and grass grew round
 it,
 Playful sunbeams darted in and found it,
 Drops of dew stole in, by night, and crowned
 it,
 But no foot of man e'er trod that way;
 Earth was young, and keeping holiday.

Monster fishes swam the silent main,
 Stately forests waved their giant branches,
 Mountains hurled their snowy avalanches,
 Mammoth creatures stalked across the plain;
 Nature revelled in grand mysteries,
 But the little fern was not of these,
 Did not number with the hills and trees;
 Only grew and waved, its sweet wild way, —
 No one came to note it, day by day.

Earth, one time, put on a frolic mood,
 Heaved the rocks, and changed the mighty
 motion.

Of the deep, strong currents of the ocean,
 Moved the plain, and shook the haughty wood,
 Crushed the little fern in soft, moist clay,
 Covered it, and hid it safe away;
 Oh, the long, long centuries since that day!
 Oh, the agony! Oh, life's bitter cost,
 Since that useless little fern was lost!

Useless? Lost? There came a thoughtful man,
 Searching Nature's secrets, far and deep;
 From a fissure in a rocky steep
 He withdrew a stone, o'er which there ran
 Fairy pencillings, a quaint design,
 Veinings, leafage, fibres clear and fine,
 And the fern's life lay in every line!
 So, I think, God hides some souls away,
 Sweetly to surprise us, the last day.

Public Opinion.

A WALK TO ACCRINGTON ON THE
FOURTH OF MARCH.

BY JEAN INGELOW.

(WRITTEN FOR A FRIEND'S BIRTHDAY).

"The days of our life are threescore years and ten."

A BIRTHDAY: — and now a day that rose
 With much of hope, with meandering rife —
 A thoughtful day from dawn to close:
 The middle day of human life.

In sloping fields on narrow plains
 The sheep were feeding on their knees,
 As we went through the winding lanes,
 Strew'd with red buds of alder trees.

So warm the day — its influence lent
 To flagging thought a stronger wing;
 So utterly was winter spent,
 So sudden was the birth of spring.

Wild crocus flowers in copse and hedge —
 In sunlight, clustering thick below,
 Sighed for the firwood's shaded ledge,
 Where sparkled yet a line of snow.

And crowded snowdrops faintly hung
 Their fair heads lower for the heat,
 While in still air all branches flung
 Their shadowy doubles at our feet.

And through the hedge the sunbeams crept,
 Dropped through the maple and the birch;
 And lost in airy distance slept
 On the broad tower of Tamworth Church.

Then, lingering on the downward way,
 A little space we resting stood,
 To watch the golden haze that lay
 Adown that river by the wood.

A distance vague, the bloom of sleep
 The constant sun had lent the scene
 A veiling charm on dingles deep
 Lay soft those pastoral hills between.

There are some days that die not out,
 Nor alter by reflection's power,
 Whose converse calm, whose words devout,
 For ever rest, the spirit's dower.

And they are days when drops a veil —
 A mist upon the distance past;
 And while we say to peace — "All hail!"
 We hope that always it shall last.

Times when the troubles of the heart
 Are hushed — as winds were hushed that
 day —
 And budding hopes begin to start,
 Like those green hedgerows on our way.

When all within and all around,
 Like hues on that sweet landscape blend,
 And Nature's hand has made to sound
 The heartstrings that her touch attend.

When there are rays within, like those
 That streamed through maple and through
 birch,
 And rested in such calm repose
 On the broad tower of Tamworth Church.
 Good Words.

From The Edinburgh Review.

SAINTE-BEUVE.*

On a gloomy day in the early part of last November, a modest house in the little suburban Rue Montparnasse, in the Parisian capital, was the centre of great but mournful interest. One of the chief literary stars of France was extinguished. Sainte-Beuve, Senator and Academician, who had passed the greater part of his life in this quiet habitation, was dead, and about five thousand persons of all classes assembled to accompany his remains to the grave. Among the crowd were to be remarked poets, historians, novelists, critics, artists, and journalists of every grade of distinction, together with a body of Parisian students and a multitude of citizens of every class. The assemblage was perhaps the larger by reason of the directions contained in the will of the deceased. He had requested that his remains should not be taken to any church, that no religious rites should be observed, and no discourse be pronounced over his grave. Moreover, his recent speeches in the Senate had found great favour with the Liberal party, so that the funeral itself had something of the nature of a demonstration on behalf of political and religious freedom. The funeral, as conducted according to the desire of the deceased, was for that reason of more than usually solemn import. It was but a few steps from the house to the tomb in the neighbouring *Cimetière Montparnasse*. After the coffin was lowered, and a single crown

of violets deposited upon it; and after one of the executors advancing to the head of the grave had simply uttered the words, "*Adieu, Sainte-Beuve! adieu, notre ami, adieu!*" he turned to the crowd and thanked them for their attendance—the ceremony was over, and the mystery of death weighed blank upon the soul in all its dark and unadorned reality. Groups of friends and admirers, however, were observed lounging about the cemetery, discussing the life and the career of the deceased. By most of these he had been seen in the little study, which was also his bedroom, in the first story of his dwelling-house in the Rue Montparnasse surrounded by his papers and his books. The window, in front of which was his chair and table, looked towards the south and down on a small garden, planted, we think, with five trees, of which he was as proud as a lover and sympathiser with Horace and Horatian desires was bound to be. Through the window the author's favourite pigeons might sometimes be seen either flying across the garden or perched upon the sill, where they were fed daily by his hand. He was easily accessible, and that even to the poor of his vicinity, who knew him for a charitable neighbour; and few were his visitors who did not come away charmed by an interview with the homely-looking man, the marked but not handsome lines of whose closely shaven face bore during late years traces of suffering from a painful inward malady endured with patience, as well as of a lifetime of thought and study. With his black skull-cap, his composed features, and his quiet placid demeanour, he bore no small resemblance to a little somewhat stout *abbé* of the eighteenth century—a pleasant aspect and manner was indeed his habitual characteristic—yet on occasion the large eyes, somewhat *à fleur de tête*, would glisten and the full lips would curve as he would deliver himself of a *mot* or sarcasm, none the less piercing for its excessive fineness and the calmness of its delivery.

It is somewhat difficult to review comprehensively the life and literary labours of a man of so versatile and various a genius as Sainte-Beuve, whose literary activity dealt with a multitude of subjects, and pro-

* 1. *Tableau de la Poesie française au XVII^eme Siècle*. 2 vols. 8vo. Paris: 1828.

2. *Poesies complètes*. 2 vols. 8vo. Paris: 1869.

3. *Critiques et Portraits littéraires*. 5 vols. 8vo. Paris: 1836-39.

4. *Portraits contemporains et divers*. 4 vols. Paris: 1869-70.

5. *Portraits de Femmes*. 1 vol. 1870.

6. *Volupté*. 1 vol. 5me édition. Paris: 1862.

7. *Histoire de Port-Royal*. 6 vols. 3me édition. 1867.

8. *Chateaubriand et son Groupe*. 2 vols. 2me édition. 1870.

9. *Causeries de Lundi*. 15 vols. 1852-60.

10. *Etude sur Virgile*. 2me édition. 1870.

11. *Etude sur Jomini*. 1869.

12. *Nouveaux Lundis*. 12 vols. 1863-70.

13. *Etude sur Talleyrand*. 1 vol. 1870.

14. *A propos des Bibliothèques populaires*. 1870.

15. *De la Liberté de l'Enseignement supérieur*. 1870.

16. *De la Loi sur la Presse*. 1870.

duced but one work of any length; it were as hopeless to attempt, by describing the track of a bee across the countless flowers of a garden, to give a flavour of its honey, as to try to give a notice of the literary qualities of Sainte-Beuve to those who have not read his writings; nevertheless, as his literary career of nearly half a century had points of contact and intersection with those of nearly every great contemporary writer, and as the successive phases of literary and other creeds through which he passed were in a measure common to him and to his time, some estimate of his whole activity may serve not only to render the leading points of his character more apparent, but to show also through what rapid transformations the course of French literature has passed in a single lifetime.

Charles-Augustin Sainte-Beuve* a posthumous child, was born at Boulogne-sur-mer, on December 23, 1804. His father held a civil appointment under Government in that town, and died in the very year of his marriage, two months before the birth of his son. Sainte-Beuve had written —

"Je naquis en deuil,
Et mon berceau d'abord posa sur un cercueil."

The mournful circumstances which attended his birth probably had some influence on his nature, for Sainte-Beuve was not gay by temperament. His father had some taste as well as erudition; he left a library of books annotated on the margin with his own hand, which Sainte-Beuve did not fail to peruse with the sympathy of a literary nature and a reverent spirit—it was the only communion possible with the author of his existence.

"Si ne dans sa mort meme
Ma memoire n'eut pas son image supreme,
Il m'a laisse du moins son ame et son esprit,
Et son gout tout entier a chaque marge ecrit."

His mother to whose undivided care he was thus left, was the daughter of an English lady, and to her influence may be traced the predilection which Sainte-Beuve evinced for Cowper, Crabbe, and the Lake writers, whose style of poetry he endeavoured to rival in the French tongue. He received

a rudimentary course of education at Boulogne, and was then removed to Paris, to the Collège Charlemagne. After a brilliant course of academical success, he repressed at first the temptations of a literary career, and commenced the study of medicine. In his first volume of poetry he sets forth, under the pseudonym of Joseph Delorme—the considerations which led him to adopt medicine as a profession.

"La raison de Joseph, fortifiée des l'année par des habitudes sérieuses, et soutenue d'une immense curiosité scientifique, s'élève d'elle-même contre les inclinations du poète pour les dompter. Elle lui parla l'austère langage d'un père, lui représenta les illusions de la gloire, les vanités de l'imagination, sa propre condition, si médiocre et si précaire, l'incertitude des temps, et de toutes parts autour de lui les menaces des révolutions nouvelles. Que faire d'une lyre en ces jours d'orages?—la lyre fut brisée!"

Nevertheless external circumstances, by which the career of so many authors has been directed to literature, came in to change the fate of Sainte-Beuve. He had succeeded so far in the practice of medicine that, though poor and living an almost solitary life in a humble furnished apartment, he was named an *élève externe* of the Hospital of Saint-Louis. When M. Dubois, one of his old professors at the Collège Charlemagne, who entertained great hopes of his talents, became editor of the "Globe," invited the collaboration of his former pupil, Sainte-Beuve responded by supplying some critical articles which attracted attention, and which were especially noticed by a critic of pure and refined taste—M. Jouffroy. M. Jouffroy became his friend and counsellor in the initiatory steps of the literary career which he now resolved to adopting. In 1827 the "Odes et Ballades" of Victor Hugo—the first outbreak of that singular genius—astonished the public, and was said to have drawn from Chateaubriand himself the epithet of "*enfant sublime*," and to Sainte-Beuve was intrusted the task of delivering the judgment of the "Globe." His criticism was favourable, but not without some restrictions in which he signalized the extravagant comparisons, the distorted metaphors and faulty diction, which have continued to characterize the

* The father of Sainte-Beuve, it may be observed, wrote his name *de* Sainte-Beuve. Sainte-Beuve, however, dropped the particle.

productions of this gigantic but deformed writer, then about to be proclaimed chief of the Romantic School in process of formation. This article by Sainte-Beuve led to an acquaintance with Victor Hugo, and the critic submitted his own poetry to the notice and obtained the approval of the rising poet. The acquaintance ripened into intimacy, and Sainte-Beuve, with characteristic facility, became an enthusiastic admirer of the doctrines of the Romantic School and of the genius of its chief. He was invited to listen to the preliminary readings of Victor Hugo's drama of "Cromwell" and its famous preface, and became a member of the fraternity who styled themselves somewhat profanely the "Cénacle," where his associates were Alfred de Vigny, Alfred de Musset, and the two brothers Antoine and Emile Deschamps. Under the influence of such associations and at the suggestion of M. Daunou, an academician well versed in the early literature of France, he composed his first book, published in 1828, and called "Tableau de la Poésie française au XVII^e siècle." The work was declared by the "Revue française" to be a marvel of criticism, and was accepted by the chiefs of the Romantic School as a brilliant service rendered by a valuable ally to their common cause. It transported the reader back to what may be called the præ-classical period of the literature of France, to the period antecedent to Boileau and Malherbe. Not but what Ronsard and the poets of the *Pléiade* who were popular for fifty years in France may in a certain sense be called classical, since they imitated largely the ancient writers; but they reigned before the classical period of the French tongue, before the "Enfin Malherbe vint" of Boileau. The work of Sainte-Beuve was an attempt to find ancestors for the Romantic School in the earlier French literature, and an effort at the same time to secure the fame of Ronsard from the strange oblivion into which he had fallen after astonishing popularity. In both respects he must be admitted to have been partially successful. The shade of Ronsard certainly owes a tribute of gratitude to Sainte-Beuve, whose delicacy of judgment has selected from the mass of forgotten stanzas of the poet of the Valois and of

Mary Stuart various pieces which exhibit a freshness of language and a truth of nature not to be found in similar compositions under the classical régime.

In the following year Sainte-Beuve appealed himself to the public as a poet in a volume which purported to be the poetical and literary remains of a deceased student of medicine, Joseph Delorme. The volume is well worth the attention of all who would understand the character of Sainte-Beuve, besides containing much that is undeniably of high poetic merit. No notice of Sainte-Beuve, indeed, would be complete without some account of his poetry. The poetic fibre did undoubtedly exist in him, and though what he has written never became popular, yet he succeeded at least in earning the title of poet from such poets themselves as Lamartine, Victor Hugo, Alfred de Musset, and the two Deschamps, and from such critics as Jouffroy, Magnin, and Duvergier de Hauranne. Sainte-Beuve cherished with fondness to the last his early poetical productions; nothing gave him greater pleasure than to have the old poetic chords stirred within him, and no visitor could find an easier way to his heart than by giving him some token that he was acquainted with the pages of "Joseph Delorme" and the "Consolations." In fact, we believe he looked with greater tenderness on the two volumes which contain his poetry as finally collected and revised by himself, than on all his prose writings put together. He never ceased to write verses in his leisure hours, although the failure of his last volume, the "Pensées d'Août," in point of popularity deterred him from further publication. That Sainte-Beuve nevertheless did regret his absolute restriction to a prose career was known to his friends; indeed he has not shrunk from a public avowal to that effect — "Le poète en moi," he wrote, "a quelquefois souffert de toutes les indulgences même qu'on avait pour le prosateur."

Yet notwithstanding the absence of popularity, it was an honourable distinction of his career to have succeeded so far as to be admitted into fraternity by the great poets of his time, and to have satisfied in some measure the exigencies of men of severe taste. Such work cannot be looked

on as failure: it always excites emulation and thought, and acts either by way of directing aspiration to new efforts or by way of warning. No writers of any eminence in France, we may be sure, have since the publication of Sainte-Beuve's poems failed to give them consideration.

For the poetic efforts of Sainte-Beuve were indeed in great part tentative and experimental. His English descent through his mother had led, as we have stated, to his acquaintance with Cowper, Crabbe, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Lamb; and his ambition was to introduce into the French language poetry of the same simplicity, truthfulness, elegance, and subdued passion drawn from natural scenery and types of ordinary life. It may be doubted, however, whether the kind of poetry which Sainte-Beuve aimed at producing is suited to the genius of the French language—certainly the moment in which he made the experiment was unfortunate. It could not be expected that poetry of so quiet a tone would make a deep impression on public attention, then fully occupied with the spiritual rhapsodies of Lamartine, the gorgeous pomp and colouring of the "Odes et Ballades" and "Orientales" of Victor Hugo, and the passionate vivacity of Alfred de Musset. These three poets struck notes which were sure to resound more loudly on the public ear, and to agitate the passions of the time more deeply than those to be found in "Joseph Delorme" and the "Consolations."

It may be supposed that a desire to keep close to truth and reality led Sainte-Beuve to give his fictitious Joseph Delorme the condition of a medical student. This incident, however, gave M. Guizot the opportunity of classifying Joseph as a "*Werther jacobin et carabin*;" and although Sainte-Beuve replied he was but a "*Girondin*" at the worst, his hero still remains a "*Werther carabin*;" for the character he has conceived is of the same family as the Werthers, Rénés, Obermanns, Jacopo Ortis, and other imaginary beings whom Melancholy marked for her own, and who were popular at the same time as "*Childe Harold*." The psychological condition which has been called "*le mal de René*," of which they were the expression, has now died away, and perhaps is barely intelligible to the greater part of our positive generation, who, if they have any spiritual malady at all, have it of quite an opposite complexion. Therefore the sorrows, passions, and dreamy meditations of Joseph Delorme have less chance of meeting with sympathy now than in the days of his contemporaries.

Indeed, those who knew Sainte-Beuve in his later years, and the readers of the "*Causeries de Lundi*," will find in his first volume of poetry, as well as in "*Volupté*," indications of emotions and tendencies with which they would hardly have expected to meet in such a writer, and which the habit of continuous criticism afterwards suppressed.

However, there are two characters in Joseph Delorme. There is the consumptive student perishing with decline and excessive labour, sometimes abandoned to the promptings of despair and doubt and incredulity, and returning ever and anon to ideas of suicide, sometimes endeavouring to find refuge from the gloomy imaginations which beset him in gross and facile pleasures and in sombre misanthropy, and sometimes escaping from all the temptations both from within and without, and finding delight in the contemplation of nature, of purity, and graceful simplicity. And there is another Delorme also, the indefatigable and curious student, whose qualities remained active in Sainte-Beuve to the end of his life. We will quote one quaint and striking little piece from this volume which characterizes the latter division of Delorme's nature, and affords an interesting sketch of what Sainte-Beuve may be presumed to have been in his early days of literary research. It is styled *Mes Livres* :—

"J'aime rimer, et j'aime lire aussi.
Lorsqu'a rêver mon front s'est obscurci,
Qu'il est sorti de ma pauvre cervelle,
Deux jours durant, une églogue nouvelle,
Soixante vers, ou quatre-vingts au plus,
Et qu'au reveil, lourd encore et l'âme ivre,
Pour pres d'un mois je me sens tout perclus;
O mes amis ! alors je prends un livre,
Non pas un seul, mais dix, mais vingt, mais cent;
Non les meilleurs, Byron le magnanime,
Le grand Milton, ou Dante le puissant,
Mais tous *Anas*, de naissance anonyme,
Semes de tout que je note en passant:
C'est mon bonheur. Sauriez-vous pas de grace
En quel recoin et parmi quel fatras
Il me serait possible d'avoir trace
Du long séjour que fit a Carpentras
Monsieur Malherbe, ou de quel air Menage,
Chez Sevigne, jouait son personnage.
Monsieur Courtart, savait-il le latin
Mieux que Joux ? consumait-il en plumes
Mieux que Suard ? Le docteur Gui Patin,
Avait-il plus de dix mille volumes ?
Problèmes pas poses mais toujours pendans,
Qu'a grand plaisir je retourne et travaille.
Vaut-il pas mieux quand on est sur les dents
Plutôt qu'à aller rimailleur rien qui vaille,
Se faire rat et ronger une maille ?
En cette humeur, s'il me vient sous la main,

Le long des quais, en velin, un peu jaune,
Le titre en rouge, et la date en romain,
Au frontispice un saint Jean sur le trône,
Le tout couvert d'un fort blanc parohemin,
Oh ! que ce soit un Ronsard, un Petrone,
Un a-Kempis — pour moi c'est un tresor,
Que j'ouvre et ferme et que je rouvre encore."

The "Consolations," which Sainte-Beuve published the following year, denoted a considerable revolution in the moral order of his ideas, though the style remained the same. Joseph Delorme had exhibited a tendency to materialist doctrines; the *Werther carabin* was the pupil of Diderot and Holbach. In the "Consolations," on the contrary, all materialism, all that was crude and sometimes gross in detail, had disappeared before a mystical religiosity. Sainte-Beuve has spoken of a *crise morale* having occurred at this period of his life, by which we are probably to understand some unsuccessful attachment, under whose influence he had a period of religious exaltation. Mystical reveries, artistic sensations, letters to poetic friends, recollections of childhood, simple sketches of nature, form then the subject of the new volume, which was not given out like the former under a pseudonym, and yet perhaps it was less a representation of Sainte-Beuve than the first. At the most, it was the expression of a transitory stage in his moral development.

"L'impression," wrote Beuve later, "sous laquelle j'ai écrit les 'Consolations,' n'est jamais revenue, et ne s'est plus renouvelée pour moi. Ces six mois célestes de ma vie, comme je les appelle, ce mélange de sentiments tendres, fragiles et chrétiens qui faisaient un charme, cela en effet ne pouvait durer, et ceux de mes amis (il en est) qui auraient voulu me fixer et immobiliser dans cette nuance, oublièrent trop que ce n'était réellement qu'une nuance aussi passagère et changeante que le reflet de la lumière sur les nuages ou dans un étang à une certaine heure du matin, à une certaine inclination du soir."

We shall have more to say about this constancy in inconstancy so distinctive of Sainte-Beuve's life, and upon which he looked with such complacency, and we confine ourselves here to the remark that the "Consolations," were regarded with different eyes by different admirers of "Joseph Delorme." Although it was perhaps the most successful of Sainte-Beuve's volumes of poetry, and was the most admired by such judges as Victor Hugo and Alfred de Vigny, the religious tone of the volume was distasteful to many, and Béranger, in a letter otherwise complimentary, could barely pardon Sainte-Beuve "*ce lam-*

beau de culte jeté sur sa foi de déiste," as he expresses it, and accused him of paying compliments to the "*Seigneur*," in the same way as the Cardinals thanked Jupiter and all the pagan gods of Olympus at the election of a new Pope. However, there is no reason for doubting that Sainte-Beuve was sincere in the "Consolations," and that he had, or thought he had, at this time a mystical religious visitation. He often referred to it in after life as to something which could not last, and indeed it was but one of his various moral transformations, until he reached the final stage in which he died.

The phase of religious aspiration of the "Consolations" had nevertheless an enduring effect upon Sainte-Beuve's style, although it had none on his ultimate religious convictions; it probably directed his thoughts towards the project of writing a history of Port Royal; its effects are largely noticeable in his novel "*Volupté*;" and it gave him a sort of unctious diction which is noticeable when he is dealing with any topic in which it is admissible. Subsequently to the "Consolations," Sainte-Beuve put forth another volume in somewhat the same strain, the "*Pensées d'Août*." The neglect, however, into which this new effort was allowed to pass, put an end to his poetical activity in the way of publication, though it was easy at any time to awaken within him the slumbering embers into a flame, one of the most remarkable instances of which was his reply to some well-known lines of Alfred de Musset, written upon a phrase to be found in one of Sainte-Beuve's criticisms — "*Chaque homme contient un poète mort dans son âme*."

"Aujourd'hui," writes Sainte-Beuve later, "*on me croit seulement un critique, mais je n'ai pas quitté la poésie sans y avoir laissé tout mon aiguillon*."

The early part of the critical career of Sainte-Beuve has been cast into the shade by the success of the "*Causeries de Lundi*;" nevertheless, to understand the manner in which he arrived at his later degree of perfection in criticism, it is necessary that this earlier period should be taken into account. Like Raphael and many of the old artists, Sainte-Beuve passed through three manners in his method of passing judgment on literary matters. One of the most significant of the articles which he wrote under the influence of his early romantic associations was that on Jean-Baptiste Rousseau, published in the first volume of his "*Portraits littéraires*." This article was indeed an event in the literary history of France; it

analysed anew with impartial delicacy and ability the reputation of a factitious glory consecrated by tradition and habit; and although Sainte-Beuve preserved as usual a certain moderation in his depreciatory judgment, the article nevertheless proved as prejudicial to the fame of Rousseau's artificial lyrics as his earlier criticism of the poetry of the sixteenth century had proved favourable to Ronsard. The articles on "Boileau," "Lebrun," and other of the past glories of French literature are conceived and executed with the same discriminating judgment and fresh spirit of appreciation. Yet although the measure of praise or blame is carefully apportioned to the subject, these criticisms must not be taken as the final expression of Sainte-Beuve's judgment on the subject of each notice. Notwithstanding their moderation, he described some of them later as being written in all the insolence of aggressive youth. The article on "Boileau" he considered especially as requiring very considerable modifications; and he has declared decisively that in his opinion youth cannot possess that very delicate quality, taste; the calmness of judgment at that period is too much troubled by passion, by ardours in special and sometimes extravagant directions, to allow the balance to be held by a steady and impartial hand; youth, indeed, is too *piena di se*, too confident in its own force, to observe and to reflect with due deliberation.

From this first, the aggressive manner of criticism, Sainte-Beuve extricated himself under the reign of Louis-Philippe. During the eighteen years of the prevalence of a literature which had ceased to have the quality of artistic novelty, which was now admired as well as tolerated, Sainte-Beuve's style of criticism, as represented by his articles in the "*Revue des Deux Mondes*," became more impartial, more neutral in tone; it was analytic, descriptive, and somewhat discursive; but as he characterised it himself, in contrasting it with his later manner, it had the defect of not being conclusive. There was still a certain obliquity in his way of looking at his subject; the point of view chosen was not central and directly in front as in later times. The articles of this period are collected in the series called "*Portraits des Contemporains*," to which the student of French literature will always refer with delight and instruction. All the chief writers of Sainte-Beuve's time are passed under review in these volumes. But not only are the judgments passed on his contemporaries less evenly balanced than those which he passed in the full maturity of his critical faculty, — requiring the sup-

plementary restrictions of corrective notes, added to late editions, which signalise Sainte-Beuve's changes of literary opinion, — but the style is more involved and the diction less simple, more strained, more insidiously twisted than in the "*Causeries de Lundi*." Prolixity of expression, discursiveness, and consequently a frequent failure of direct, logical, consecutive interest, are faults in those literary studies which Sainte-Beuve contrived wholly to avoid after he began his "*Lundis*" in the "*Constitutionnel*."

The revolution of 1830, indeed, brought afresh a great change in the moral and social ideas of Sainte-Beuve. He had become a proselyte anew, and that to the visionary schemes of Saint-Simon for the transformation of society, which, notwithstanding their Utopian character, enrolled among their adherents some of the most eminent intellects in France: for, strangely enough, among the early adepts of Saint-Simonism may be counted men who have since become famous, men of administrative and practical capacity, of whom M. Michel Chevalier is one, distinguished for their just application to commercial affairs of the rigorous principles of political economy. The time from 1830 to 1840 was indeed a peculiar period of transformation and transition in the life of Sainte-Beuve, for it was not until 1840 that he arrived at compressing all those vague and mystic aspirations which mark the first years of his manhood into that unchanging code of rationalism, both in politics and religion, which was the creed of the last thirty years of his life. After the Revolution of July, M. Pierre Leroux had succeeded to the editorship of the "*Globe*," and under his auspices he laboured at the propagation of Saint-Simonian doctrines in the columns of that journal. A large sympathy with humanity and with the sorrows of his fellow-men was always characteristic of Sainte-Beuve; and he now addressed himself to the Romantic School, and invited them not to confine their energies to the domain of pure art, but to assist in the general work of the amelioration of human social conditions. Soon after this he became acquainted with Lamennais. The ardent religious spirit of the prophet and reformer, the very proofs of whose "*Paroles d'un Croyant*" set the printers of the establishment where they were printed in a state of spiritual commotion characteristic of the time, had a strange attraction for him. It was, in fact, by his mediation that the "*Paroles d'un Croyant*" first saw the light. He now went wild with enthusiasm for Lamennais; and while under the influence

of this relationship he wrote the novel of "Volupté," the leading personage of which is a priest, who previous to his consecration is subject to a long and painful conflict of sensual and spiritual desires, out of which the spiritual qualities at last emerge victorious. It was at this period also that he conceived the idea of writing the history of Port Royal, which to those who are only acquainted with the latter half of his life and writings must always have appeared as an undertaking marked with some incongruity.

It assuredly is a singular fact in literary history that a writer who finished his career like Sainte-Beuve should have chosen such a subject for the greater labour of his life; and that, although the idea of the work was conceived under the influence of a certain religious mysticism, which had entirely evaporated before the author had published the first volume, he continued nevertheless to labour intermittently at his enterprise for more than twenty years, with the same devotion and the same scrupulous exactness and completeness; and that it is only in the final page—where he takes farewell of the reader after the fashion of Gibbon—that the author reveals that he has been studying this evolution of religious sentiment, this ferment and conflict of spiritual forces, with the same sort of impartial curiosity with which a naturalist might observe the doings of bees in a glass house.

If our reader has followed us so far, he will feel it time that some estimate or attempt at explanation should be made of the excessive mobility of Sainte-Beuve's nature, which has become sufficiently apparent in the course of this article.

Sainte-Beuve has been described somewhere as a soul constantly on the look-out to espouse some other soul, and then, as soon as the espousals were consummated, to have been as constantly looking out for reasons for divorce—a sort of Don Juan, in fact, of a literary kind. "Enthusiasm and repentance," it has been said, might form the epigraph of the collections of his criticism. A characteristic story has been told of the way in which he treated the portrait of a novelist of the day. Sainte-Beuve having written a favourable criticism on his first novel, the author, in the first gush of gratitude, arrived with his portrait under his arm as a present to his illustrious critic. The portrait was allowed a prominent place in Sainte-Beuve's study. A second novel appeared inferior to the first; the portrait was banished to the ground floor. After the appearance of a third novel by

the same author, the portrait went out of the house altogether, and was heard of subsequently as migrating from friend's house to friend's house, till it vanished in undistinguishable regions.

One can indeed hardly forbear from a smile in contrasting the modified expressions of Sainte-Beuve of later years with the signs of enthusiasm for his literary contemporaries which abound in the "Consolations." Alfred de Vigny—author of *Eloa* and *Moïse* was the *chantre-élu*, the *ange*, the *séraphin*, the *apôtre* of his time. The volume itself was dedicated to Victor Hugo, whom he spoke of as "Notre grand Victor," and with respect to Victor Hugo it must be noticed, that, in spite of broken ties of friendship and a change of literary opinions, he abstained in later times from all direct renunciation of the praise offered to the object of his early idolatry.

It was in the year 1835 that Sainte-Beuve began to separate himself from the Romantic School; and in this year appeared a very remarkable article from his pen, entitled "Du Génie critique de Bayle," which may be regarded as a sort of literary apology for his desertion from the ranks of the Romanticists, and at the same time as a philosophic investigation into the critical nature, based on deductions drawn, we may believe, from his own experience. After setting forth that indifference was one of the chief characteristics of Bayle, he adds:—

"Cette indifférence du fond, cette tolérance prompt et facile, aiguë de plaisir, est une des conditions essentielles du génie critique. Ce génie prend tout en considération, fait tout valoir, et se laisse d'abord aller *sauf à revenir bientôt*. Il ne craint pas de se mesallier: il va partout, le long des rues s'informant, accostant, la curiosité l'alleche, et il ne s'épargne pas les regals qui se présentent. *L'infidélité est le trait de ces esprits divers et intelligents.*"

It is hardly possible to erect infidelity into a virtue with more charming condour; but there is a sonnet of Sainte-Beuve in "Joseph Delorme" in which he celebrates the satisfaction which he feels in breaking the bonds of servitude and passion; which may also in some measure be applied equally to describe the sense of delight which he experienced at recovering his independence, and at finding himself liberated from a system of literary partisanship in behalf of principles to which he could no longer adhere:—

"Osons tout et disons nos sentiments divers;
Nul moment n'est plus doux au cœur mal et
sauvage

Que lorsqu'après des mois d'un trop ingrat
servage,

Un matin par bonheur il a brisé les fers.
La fleche le perçoit, et pénétrant ses chairs,
Elle le suivait partout: de bocage en bocage
Il errait. Mais le trait tout d'un coup se dégage,
Il le rejette au loin tout sanglant dans les airs.
O joie! O ori d'orgueil! O liberté rendue!
Espace retrouve, courses dans l'étendue
Que les ardents soleils l'inondent maintenant!
Comme un guerrier, mais que l'épreuve rassure,
A mainte cicatrice ajoutant sa blessure,
Je porte haut la tête et triomphe en saignant."

It would be unfair to drive the deduction which might be drawn from this love sonnet too far; but it is clear that in the early part of Sainte-Beuve's career his judgment and admiration were liable to be rapidly and successively captivated by the various enthusiasms of the time, and that, after yielding for a while to the new impulse, his mind cooled into the reflective stage, and he looked about for reasons to establish himself in a stage of dispassionate independence. His curiosity led him to wish to investigate every subject capable of interesting a man endowed with earnest literary energy, from which a certain amount of spirituality is rarely absent, and in the ardour of youth he became for a while impassioned for ideas on which he learned to look with serene indifference. Being endowed with a mind in which the critical faculties were far more active than the creative, the critical faculties at last gained complete possession of the field; and in 1840, at the age of thirty-six, he settled down into his final stage. The age of faith with him was over—that of reason took its place; and henceforth, although liable to be moved for a time even then to admiration too fervent to be permanent, he preserved with jealous watchfulness his integrity of judgment.

The novel of "Volupté," notwithstanding its many remarkable qualities, affords in our opinion sufficient proof that Sainte-Beuve was not endowed with the creative faculties necessary to constitute a writer of pure fiction. The novel may indeed be said to have been successful, since it formed a constituent part of his early claim to literary fame, and is still read; but one novel, unless it form as great an event in literary history as "Paul and Virginia," or the "Vicar of Wakefield," can hardly be considered as giving a title to its author to rank as a novelist. "Volupté," as the writer indeed declared, is evidently a study drawn from the observation and recollections of persons and circumstances intimately connected with himself. The characters are well drawn, and have distinct individuality;

many pages of psychological analysis show a minute faculty of self-examination; the description of the interior life of a seminary—in which however Sainte-Beuve was aided by Lacordaire—is eminently truthful, and is delicately touched. The language, too, is as elegant as might be expected from the pen of Sainte-Beuve, but the story lacks interest, action, passion and power. It had in its own day formidable competitors in the "Notre-Dame" of Victor Hugo, the "Jocelyn" of Lamartine, and the "Lélia" of George Sand, and would, we imagine, have few readers at the present time were it not that it bears the name of Sainte-Beuve on the title-page.

Sainte-Beuve's claim to take rank as a historian by his history of Port Royal is of a more serious order. The same tendency of taste is noticeable in the choice of the subject of his historical enterprise as in those of his poetry and that of his romance—a predilection for the study of characters who had wrought and striven in retirement, apart from the broad highways of the world; and that predilection, directed by the current of religious inspiration under which he wrote the "Consolations," led him to choose the lives and workings of the Solitaires of Port Royal, and that surprising revival of religious faith in the seventeenth century known by the name of Jansenism.

He had long entertained the project of writing such a history, and had collected for this purpose a large quantity of materials, when in the summer of 1837 he made an excursion to Switzerland. In the course of his journey he visited some Swiss friends with whom he had been acquainted in Paris, and to them he mentioned the fact that the daily exigencies of his periodical labours in Paris arrested the progress of his work, for the completion of which a year's undisturbed application was necessary. His friends, who happened to have influence with the *Conseil de l'Instruction publique* and with the *Conseil d'Etat* of the Canton de Vaud, took heed of Sainte-Beuve's words, and submitted, unknown to him, a project to the authorities, which was adopted, and Sainte-Beuve was solicited to give a course of lectures for a year at the Academy of Lausanne. In the autumn he transported himself and the Jansenist books to Lausanne, and during the following twelve months the design and structure of the work was completed in a course of his lectures, of which Jansenism was the subject, leaving the details to be afterwards filled in.

One of the most admirable points of this

work is the human and literary interest which Sainte-Beuve has been enabled to infuse into a subject not possessing for the mass of readers very brilliant attractions. Indeed, when he first conceived the idea of writing the history, the enterprise seemed desperate indeed. "*Il n'y a que vous et moi*," said Royer Collard, who himself had a good deal of the Jansenist in his nature, "*pour nous occuper de Port-Royal*." Nevertheless, when the advocates of free and liberal thought on religious matters began to look for arms against Ultramontanism and the intrigues of the Jesuits, the subject of Port Royal came more into vogue, and hence the industry and skill with which Sainte-Beuve had disencumbered his narrative of tangled masses of thorns and briars of theological controversy became duly recognized. Nor is the work less remarkable for its patient research, the abundance of the documents brought to light, and the scrupulous exactness of its facts.

It is well, assuredly, to have a complete story of this extraordinary movement, of this sort of abortive but heroic Catholic Methodism, which shook in its spiritual struggle for birth the very pillars of the fabric of Papal supremacy, which was, to the injury both of royalty and religion, more dreaded and detested by the Court than either deism or atheism, and which exhausted the wiles and energies of its aggressors when they should have been preparing for conflict with more redoubtable antagonists. The work of Sainte-Beuve fills this memorable page, and will undoubtedly hold with posterity as unrivalled a position in respect to Port Royal as the work of Gibbon does to the Decline and Fall of Rome. It is not probable that any future writer will attempt to tell again the story of Jansenism after Sainte Beuve; nevertheless, the author's rank as a historian cannot be admitted to be so high as his rank as a critic. The History of Port Royal may be allowed among histories a higher place than "*Volupté*" among novels, but it has a great similarity of character. "*Volupté*" is the story of the spiritual conflicts of a single mind. The History of Port Royal is the history of a great spiritual conflict in France for nearly a century. The narrative is thus naturally of a severe order. As most of the actions passed in the cells of anchorites and the cloisters of a convent, there is no subject for brilliant and picturesque description, no room for romance, and for the infinite diversity of character offered by the theatre of the world. The incidents of court and camp, the movement of politics, the freedom, charm, and variety of social

life, find no place here. And although under the monotonous uniforms of serge and cowl Sainte-Beuve has well delineated the different natures of such men as St. François de Sales, Jansen, St. Cyran, and St. Vincent de Paul, yet there is a family resemblance of feature; the impression conveyed to us is that of a large picture in neutral colours. This deficiency was doubtless inherent in the subject; the discursiveness, however, of the work is sometimes so great that we lose sight of the subject altogether, besides which, the tone of the narrative is not pitched deep enough to bring but the most thrilling and grave effects. There is some want of eloquence and fervid power which fails to rouse emotion, although this is in great measure compensated for by the delicacy of the language, and by refinement and truth of observation.

At the conclusion of his task Sainte-Beuve wrote, after the fashion of Gibbon, a farewell to his labours; the passage was suppressed in the first edition, but included in the second, and gave no small disappointment to many of the admirers of the work. In taking leave of the *solitaires* of Port Royal, the author addresses them thus:—

"Quelle doctrine plus artificielle que la votre! Vous avez toujours parlé de la vérité, et vous avez tout sacrifié à ce qui est apparu sous ce nom; j'ai été, à ma manière, un homme de vérité aussi avant que j'ai pu l'atteindre.

"Mais que cela même que c'est peu! Que notre regard est borné, qu'il s'arrête vite! qu'il ressemble à un pale flambeau allumé un moment au milieu d'une nuit immense; et comme celui qui avait le plus à connaître son objet, qui mettait le plus d'ambition à le saisir, et le plus d'orgueil à le peindre, se sent impuissant et au-dessous de sa tâche, le jour où la voyant à peu près terminée et le résultat obtenu, l'ivresse de sa force s'apaise et la défaillance finale et l'inévitable degout le gagnent et où il s'aperçoit à son tour qu'il n'est qu'une illusion des plus fugitives au sein de l'illusion infinie."

This assuredly is one of the most mournful passages ever penned as the conclusion to a work, the result of twenty years of labour, commenced in strength, hope, and enthusiasm; the writer has come to the conviction that he is no more than "one of the most fugitive of illusions in the bosom of the Infinite Illusion." With the knowledge of this dreary conviction on the part of the writer, one cannot but marvel at the vitality of his nature, which led him at the age of forty-five to begin, as it were, a new literary career and to create for himself a new literary product, in which he

has had, and perhaps is likely to have, no rival.

The year 1840 was, as we have said, the grand climacteric of the life of Sainte-Beuve. It was in that year that he congratulated himself at being permanently healed from the pietistic malady which had ravaged him for eleven years, and which was the result of a "*grave affection morale, un grand trouble de sensibilité*," of which we are left to discover the cause. In 1840, too he was appointed Librarian of the Bibliothèque Mazarine — a post which assured his material independence. In 1845 he was elected an Academician in the place of Casimir Delavigne; and from 1840 to 1848 was, perhaps, the most brilliant and fortunate portion of his existence. He was still comparatively young, his reputation was established, his position was assured, he was the friend and favourite of some of the most distinguished men of France — among them of Count Molé; and he was a frequent visitor in the best *salons* of the time, those of the Duchesse de Broglie and of Madame Recamier, where Chateaubriand was the supreme idol, surrounded by a crowd of adorers. The revolution of 1848 came, however, and the rudeness of its shock fell hard on Sainte-Beuve, scattered his friends, broke up his associations, and deprived him of his post at the "Bibliothèque Mazarine. The circumstances which led him to vacate his office were the more irritating from their extreme triviality. Before the revolution of 1848, Sainte-Beuve had passed from the "Globe" to the "National," when it was under the direction of Armand Carrel, consequently he had the reputation of having been in opposition to the Government. But it appears that some time previously to 1848 the chimney of Sainte-Beuve's apartment in the edifice of the Mazarin Library was out of order and the *fumiste*, as the workman who attends to such things is styled, was called in to set it to rights. The charge for this repair was, in the usual course of things to be defrayed by the owner of the building, which in this case was the Government. But the charge for this smoky chimney cost Sainte-Beuve his appointment at the Mazarin Library. Amid the various disorders and exposures of the revolution of 1848, the papers of Louis-Philippe were abstracted from the Taileries, and a list was framed from them of those who had or were supposed to have received secret-service money from the late Government. In this list Sainte-Beuve's name figured for the sum of about 100 francs, and the list was published in the

"Revue contemporaine." This revelation overwhelmed Sainte-Beuve with confusion and astonishment; he was unfairly treated; he was not allowed to see the manuscript lists from which the one published was drawn; and he was unable, until some time afterwards, to identify the sum standing against his name with that spent on the repair of his chimney. Literary spite eagerly seized on the discovery; and, since Sainte-Beuve was supposed, not without grounds, to regard the revolution of 1848 as anything but a desirable change, revolutionary journalists were busy with his name. Sainte-Beuve, who loved a quiet life and hated disturbance, was unwilling to face the discredit which his enemies endeavoured to fix upon him; * with perhaps excessive timidity, he abandoned his cause, gave up his librarianship, fled from the disorders of the time, and went to Belgium, where he obtained the appointment of Lecturer on "Belles-Lettres" at the University of Liège. In this position he gave a series of lectures on Chateaubriand, which have been collected into two volumes.

These volumes are remarkable as an example of what Sainte-Beuve could do in the way of long and minute critical analysis. Neither in his very masterly "*Etude sur Virgile*," published later, nor in his earlier study of Ronsard, has he given such an example of careful analytic criticism on a large scale as in his volumes on Chateaubriand. It is indeed a merciless masterpiece of literary dissection. The critic shows no lack of admiration for whatever can be admired in the author of "*René*" and the "*Martyrs*," but the probe is thrust deeply into all the weak parts of his artistic and moral nature. The criticism is, however, too searching and too unsparing; and the writer takes a somewhat unfair advantage of his personal knowledge of Chateaubriand, and his acquaintance with the *salon* of Madame Recamier, where he had seen that once so celebrated poet and politician constantly in the last days of his life, and where he had listened before publication to pages of the "*Mémoires d'Outre Tombe*."

After his return to France in 1850, Sainte-Beuve received an offer from Dr. Veron, then proprietor and editor of the

* Sainte-Beuve did not want courage. He fought a duel in his life which has been remembered from the coolness of a reply he made. When the party arrived on the ground it was raining hard. After the preliminaries were arranged, the principals took their places. Our critic took his place, with his pistol in one hand and with his umbrella over him in the other. The seconds protested. "*Je veux bien être tue*," said Sainte-Beuve, "*mais mouille, non*."

"Constitutionnel," to contribute criticisms and literary articles once a week to the columns of his journal. This was indeed a decisive moment in the life of Sainte-Beuve. Long accustomed as he now was to the peaceful atmosphere and the leisurely style of writing of reviews and of history, he had to submit to the rough collisions and imperious exigencies of journalism, and to address the readers of a newspaper on topics of literature amid the seething tumult and daily warfare of political factions. It may be said that no one was so well prepared as Sainte-Beuve for the task which was then placed before him. Now that insatiable and restless curiosity, now that capacity for successive enthusiasms and successive repentances, now that inexhaustible love of letters which, all united, had led him to take interest in all literary and most social topics, stood him in good stead. Under the new trial to which he was thus subjected most men would either have sunk and succumbed, or have become as irremediably an intellectual ruin as is the case with the mass of the writers of journalism. Sainte-Beuve, thrown back on his own resources, determined that the article demanded of him should be as perfect as the limits of time and space would permit; and his life for the next few years was one of unceasing devotion to the perfection of his Monday article.

"The 'Causeries de Lundi' were thus, indeed, articles forged upon the anvil of necessity. And when one considers the enormous amount of reading and observation which is comprised within the small compass of most of these articles, one is not surprised to learn that for about five days of every week Sainte-Beuve was almost invisible even to his most intimate friends. He had always the use of a secretary from the time he commenced his series of the 'Causeries'; and his amicable relations with his successive secretaries speak well for his geniality of nature. In the selection of a secretary he was usually fortunate. Some of these secretaries were not only men of unusual intelligence, able to render him assistance in his researches—for which he has liberally acknowledged his obligations, but became also men of letters themselves; most remained his friends till death; two were the executors of his will; and his last secretary, M. Troubat, was his residuary legatee. During, then, the first three days of each week, his secretary, sometimes assisted by Sainte-Beuve, was busy in collecting all books and documents discoverable touching the matter in hand, and in reading and commenting on them in company with

Sainte-Beuve. On the fourth day Sainte-Beuve ruminated over the article already constructed in his head; on the fifth he wrote it; and on the sixth he took it down to the office of the "Constitutionnel," and read it over to Dr. Veron who, though not a man of original power himself, had a fine sense of what was likely to suit the public. Sainte-Beuve corrected the proofs at the office of the journal, and the article appeared invariably every Monday.

Such facility and regularity of literary production are, considering the quality of the work, without parallel in literature, for the "Causeries de Lundi" have been saluted on all sides as immortal, and will in all probability live as long as the French language.

Thus every Monday the readers of the "Constitutionnel" had some new literary delicacy served up for their entertainment. The range of subject was of the most varied character—on one Monday they were able to listen to the caustic repartees of Madame du Deffand; on another they might take part in the adventurous career of Beaumarchais; on another they were introduced to the Persian poet Ferdousi; one week they might enjoy the quintessence of the biting wit of Chamfort; the next they were put face to face with the sublimity of Bossuet, or taught to sympathize with the evangelical sweetness of Fénelon. Sainte-Beuve's critical spirit was capable of ranging with equal freedom over the whole realm of French literature—from Villehardouin and Joinville down to George Sand, Thiers, Lamartine, Sainte-Marc, Girardin, Nisard, and the less known writers of his own time, with occasional but rare flights into the regions of foreign history and poetry. The appreciation of their value was immediate, and M. Guizot and M. Littré are said to have remarked of them, "*Il sont d'autant meilleurs qu'il n'a pas le temps de les gâter.*" Indeed, under the pressure of rapid production, the style of Sainte-Beuve changed very sensibly in the "Causeries de Lundi." His manner has no longer the involved, oblique, and digressive character which is noticeable in his previous studies, but is rapid, direct, and decisive; his literary judgment now expanded itself into the accent of conscious maturity. We feel we are in the hands of a master of his art, while the peculiarity of his method invests his subject with minute biographic details and historic incident, which add irresistible charm to the perusal. In fact, amid all the range of volumes which fill our libraries, we doubt if more instructive or more delightful reading is to be

found anywhere than in the twenty-nine volumes into which the "Causeries de Lundi" have been collected. And it must be added also that the production of such highly-finished literary essays week by week would have been possible nowhere else but in France, for nowhere else could be found so large a public with taste and sympathy sufficient to support the courage of the artist by appreciation; and nowhere else is the personality of a writer allowed so fair and free an address to the public in a daily newspaper. The *coup d'état* of 1851 exercised, like the revolution of 1848, a remarkable influence on the career of Sainte-Beuve. As is well known, he rapidly gave in his adherence to the new Government. It is not for us here to justify or condemn his political conduct; the fact, we believe, is that Sainte-Beuve was not suited for active political life, and did not desire to take part in it, animated as he was with the conviction that politics and pure literature (in which he felt his real vocation to lie) require different capacities for their successful prosecution. Moreover he had, as we have before hinted, no love of revolutions; he desired a stable government, and that not on the selfish view alone that civil peace is more congenial to the steady development of art and literature, but from views of humanity also; for Sainte-Beuve had ready sympathy with the sufferings of his fellow-men, and was deeply moved by the distress which weighed heavily on the industrial portion of the population of France during the days of the short-lived Republic. He consequently rallied to the Empire; nor did he do so tacitly, but in the month of August, 1852, he published an article styled "Les Regrets" in the columns of the "Constitutionnel," which made a great deal of noise, and as he flattered himself, "*porta en plein sur l'état major des salons*." This article excited, indeed, no small degree of temporary ill-feeling against Sainte-Beuve. Of its good taste or expediency there may be much question. It was directed, under the semblance of advice, against old friends and associates who had taken an active part in the Government of Louis-Philippe, and rallied them on the inconsolable airs they had given themselves since the *coup d'état*. The caustic and subtle power of insinuation of which Sainte-Beuve was a master turned the advice into a satire. With malicious gravity and with the air of a sceptical physician, he signalized the existence of new moral maladies, *le mal du pouvoir perdu* and *le mal de la parole perdue*, and treatment. Of its general tone a notion

may be formed by the following sentence:—

"Surtout je ne puis, pour mon compte, avoir grande pitié des gens auxquels il n'est arrivé d'autre malheur inconsolable que celui de ne me plus gouverner."

This article is believed to have had no small share in preparing for the writer the unfavourable reception which he met with on his appointment to the Professorship of Latin Poetry at the *Collège de France*, previously to which he had passed from the "Constitutionnel" to the "Moniteur." The Imperial Government could not fail to reward in some way the most brilliant of the literary ornaments of its career, who had thus openly declared himself its supporter. But, as is well known, when Sainte-Beuve appeared in his professorial chair, the audience, which on such occasions is composed partly of students and partly of the general public, raised such a *charivari*, to use the French term, that the professor was obliged to desist, and thought it prudent to send in his resignation. The man who had written in the "National" under Armand Carrel—who was supposed, though falsely, to have been in the pay of Louis-Philippe's Government—was treated as a political apostate, and the political animosity thus set in motion found ready allies in old literary rancours long waiting for explosion.

Sainte-Beuve, not without some diminution of public favour, continued his "Causeries" in the "Moniteur," in the "Athénæum français," and the "Revue Contemporaine;" he went back, however, for a short time, to the "Constitutionnel" to return again to the "Moniteur." It was remarked that his manner changed again slightly in the columns of the "Moniteur;" and, indeed, if a writer is, like Sainte-Beuve, at all of an impressionable nature, a different medium of periodical publication does always modify, in some way, his form of expression. The long and wide columns of the "Moniteur," and the official atmosphere of the journal in this case, rendered Sainte-Beuve's style slightly more diffusive and slightly more dignified. The first series of "Causeries" ended in 1856, but a new series commenced in 1862, entitled the "Nouveaux Lundis." In this series, Sainte-Beuve, although he does not debar himself from still exploring the ancient domains of literary interest, seems to have had at heart especially the desire to do justice to all the rising literary talents of the day. The spirit of literary curiosity and attraction for novelty was as strong in him as ever, and his appreciation of the

productions of Flaubert, Feydeau, Taine, Schérer, Renan, the brothers Goncourt, Paul de Saint-Victor, Lecomte de Lisle, was as generous as it was impartial. It is rare indeed to find a veteran in literature bestowing such warm and active interest on the works of those who are in the early morning of their literary life; and though with his fine literary taste nursed on pure literary traditions, he must have strained his liberality to the utmost in the case of writers of the Flaubert and Feydeau school, yet we cannot too much admire the geniality, catholicity, vivacity of nature, and desire for literary progress which distinguished him up to the very last moments of his life. Nothing could be more amicable than his relations with the younger members of the literary profession, who regarded him as a literary patriarch, whose smile of approval was as valuable as a diploma of rank. And further, in these later studies of his are to be found significant traces that his largely sympathetic nature had led him to reflect deeply on the most perplexing social problems of the time; as an instance of which may be noticed his studies on the writings of M. Le Play, the author of the work on the general condition of European workmen, of "La Réforme sociale," and lately of a work called "L'Organisation du Travail." In fact, his active spirit continued to be ever busy with new historical and social investigations up to the very day of his death. His last elaborate essay was on the career of General Jomini, in which he astonished even his intimate friends by the vigour and ease with which, at this late hour he overcame the technical difficulties of the subject; and as a further example of his increasing interest in social matters, he was engaged immediately before his decease in enlarging into a substantial work a very remarkable paper in the "Revue contemporaine," on the social reformer, Proudhon.

Such are the vicissitudes of public favour, that Sainte-Beuve, who was driven from his professorial chair by a liberal or illiberal demonstration in 1851, was at his death one of the most popular men in France. Nor are the reasons for this change at all mysterious. Sainte-Beuve, with his active progressive spirit, sympathised warmly with every form of social progress: but, as we have already pointed out, he was no friend of disorder or revolution—social change, to be beneficial in his view, should be brought about by peaceful evolution. Nevertheless, though he rallied to the Empire in 1851, and was named a senator on ac-

count of his distinguished position as a man of letters in 1865, he was painfully sensible of the almost absolute divorce which existed between the highest cultivated intelligence and political power under the Imperial system, although he was far from laying at the door of the Government the whole blame of whatever decline has taken place in French literature and art since the *coup d'état*. Indeed, as to this latter point, he was extremely sceptical whether a fresh birth of a brilliant, rich, and varied literature was possible at all in France since 1851; he imagined the causes of this decline to lie deeper than in the conditions of political power. But he censured the Government for not having made further advances towards the intellectual classes in the way of conciliation; and although he spoke but very rarely in the Senate, on one occasion he made a remarkable defence of the liberty of public instruction, and of his friend, M. Renan, which excited the anger of the Imperial zealots among the senators to frenzy; this independent attitude of Sainte-Beuve not only gained back to him the goodwill of estranged friends, but excited the admiration of the students of Paris. The opinion of the student body of the French capital is regarded with indifference by no prominent man of letters in France; and when a deputation from the schools of Paris laid at the feet of Sainte-Beuve the homage of their fellow-students on this occasion, he regarded the demonstration with immense satisfaction, as a complete reparation of an ancient wrong. The reputation for liberalism which he thus recovered was increased by his passing shortly afterwards from the "Moniteur" to the "Temps." He greeted warmly the new birth of liberalism signalled by the elections of 1869; and when the Chambers met after the elections, about two months before his death, he prepared a speech in which he criticised the past policy of the Imperial Government, and demonstrated the necessity of the introduction of a more liberal system. This speech he was unable from illness to pronounce in the Senate; but the draft of it was published in all the public journals. So that Sainte-Beuve died in the full odour of Liberalism, and this circumstance, together with his free-thinking opinions and the manner of his interment, combined with his popularity among the younger men of letters to give his funeral the air of a Liberal demonstration.

It remains for us to attempt to characterise the critical method of Sainte-Beuve, and indicate in what respects it seems to us defective. Some one remarked of him,

Sainte-Beuve tells us, that he was "*un assez bon juge, mais il n'avait pas de code.*" To this restriction Sainte-Beuve demurred, and he has incidentally in various *Causeries* set forth the theory upon which he founded his literary appreciations. In forming his method, he was no doubt influenced in a considerable measure by the impressions left by his early scientific and physiological studies for the medical profession. He says in one of his *Causeries*:—

"La littérature, la production littéraire, n'est point pour moi distincte ou du moins separable du reste de l'homme et de son organisation; je puis goûter une œuvre, mais il m'est difficile de la juger indépendamment de la connaissance de l'homme même; et je dirais volontiers tel arbre, tel fruit. L'étude littéraire me mène aussi tout naturellement à l'étude morale."

Some exception must, we think, be taken to this proposition of Sainte-Beuve—viewed as a general principle of æsthetic criticism. Our belief is, that our estimate of any literary work ought to be founded on our opinion of the work itself, and that we have primarily no right to travel *out of the record* (to use a legal phrase), and to consider the character of the writer, while analysing the merits or defects of his production. If the character of the writer is to be weighed together with his work, why should not the same rule be applied to painting, sculpture, and the rest of the fine arts? Yet who would imagine that the world's admiration of the Apollo Belvidere would be affected at all by the discovery of a biography of the sculptor? There is no other theory, we believe, necessary for the formation of literary judgments than the possession of a capacity for taste—a much rarer quality than is supposed—and the assiduous study of good models.

Moreover, about the authors of many of the greatest of literary works we know little or nothing. We know nothing about Homer, little about the Greek tragic poets, and little about Plato. Of Shakspeare, Spenser, and most of the Elizabethan poets, our knowledge is limited indeed. The author of the "*Imitatio Christi*" is absolutely unknown; and the fact, moreover, is that the lives of many poets and men of letters have been in direct contrast to their works. Authors of materialist and Epicurean philosophies have led the lives of ascetics. Seneca, who wrote eulogies on poverty and abnegation, lived in imperial splendour; Redi, who wrote a poem which is counted classic on the wines of Tuscany, was a water-drinker; and if Wordsworth could be proved to be the reverse, that would not at all affect the

character of his poetry. The fact is that in the case of many writers, and in that of poets especially, they are while in the act of production in an abnormal state of mind. The *Est Deus in nobis, flavente calescimus illo*, is no empty figure of speech; even a Delphic prophetess might be a very ordinary person when not on her tripod.

The consideration of the moral character of a writer and that of his biography may indeed satisfy literary curiosity, which is justifiable enough when restrained within due bounds and directed by good taste. They may also be explanatory of his text, as in the case of Dante and others, by rendering it more intelligible and investing it with new interest, but we reject altogether the notion that they should form any component part of the elements out of which we are to construct our critical judgment. One has no need, in forming an opinion of the relative beauty of two roses, to pull them to pieces, or to enter into details of vegetable physiology, or to know the accidents of their growth.

Sainte-Beuve had, in his imagination of an improved critical system, some ideas in common with the celebrated theories of M. Taine, and those of M. Emile Deschanel, in his work styled "*La Physiologie des Écrivains et des Artistes*," an "*Essai de Critique naturelle*." The tendency of criticism is no doubt working in that direction. Sainte-Beuve, however, in his articles on M. Taine or M. Deschanel, takes care to make clear how far he stops short of the materialist principles of these writers. M. Taine, with his famous theory by which he makes literary talent to be a combined product of the *race*, the *milieu*, and the *moment*, attempts through it to construct the brain of an author, fibre by fibre and cell by cell. Given the *race*, the *milieu*, and the *moment*, add so much phosphorus for the brain, so much phosphate of lime for the bones, and so much carbon for the body, and your genius can be constructed for you. Sainte-Beuve, shows, however, how utterly ineffective is M. Taine's system to account for the singular apparition of genius, and for its diversity:—

"Supposez un grand talent du moins, supposez le moule, ou mieux, le miroir magique d'un seul vrai poète brisé dans le berceau de sa naissance, il n'en ressuscitera plus jamais un autre qui soit exactement le même ni qui en tiennne lieu. Il n'y a de chaque vrai poète qu'un exemplaire.

"Je prends un autre exemple de cette spécialité unique de talent. "Paul et Virginie" porte certainement des traces de son époque; mais si "Paul et Virginie" n'avait pas été, on

pourrait soutenir par toutes sortes de mesuréments speciaux et plausibles, qu'il etait impossible a un livre de cette qualite virginale de naître dans la corruption du dixhuitieme siecle; Bernardin de Saint-Pierre seul l'a pu faire. C'est qu'il n'y a rien, je le repete, de plus imprevu que le talent, et il ne serait pas le talent s'il n'etait imprevu, s'il n'etait un seul contre plusieurs, un seul entre tous."

Leaving, however, such questionable theories aside, and regarding Sainte-Beuve's *Essays* simply as biographical literary studies — they are in this respect most estimable; his knowledge of human nature is great, he has wide sympathy with all its sentiments, emotions and passions, his own poetic instincts and poetic fineness of expression have free and constant exercise, while his delicacy of perception is such that an expression, sometimes the frequent use of a word or even a single word, will act as a revelation of a leading trait of a character. Such admirable biographical essays in so small a compass are nowhere else to be found. They are miniatures of the most exquisite workmanship.

His faculty of criticism is also beyond measure admirable, and his taste had, as we have noted, toned down considerably in his later years. What rare qualities and conspiring circumstances were necessary in his opinion to co-operate in the formation of a delicate taste, he has left a record in a note written in one of the volumes of his library.

"La jeunesse est trop ardente pour avoir du gout. Pour avoir du gout il ne suffit pas d'avoir en soi la faculte de goûter les belles et douces choses de l'esprit; il faut encore des livres, une ame libre et vacante, redevenue comme innocente, non livree aux passions, non affaïee, non bourlee d'apres soins et d'inquietudes positives, une ame desinteresse et meme exempte du feu trop ardent de la composition, non en proie a sa propre verve insolente; il faut du repos, de l'oubli, du silence, de l'espace autour de soi. Que de conditions, meme quand on a en soi la faculte de les goûter, pour jouir des choses delicates!"

If we accept these conditions laid down by Sainte-Beuve, and they are worth reflecting on, and add to them the maxim of Vauvenargues, "*il faut avoir de l'ame pour avoir du gout*," it must be confessed that the formation of a taste is one of the most difficult of human achievements, and one to which the conditions of the present age are not very favourable.

That the taste of Sainte-Beuve advanced
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with his years in delicacy and refinement is indisputable. Nevertheless, with all its delicacy and universality, there is one fundamental deficiency, which may be attributed to the doctrine of "Indifference," which he laid down in the article before alluded to on Bayle, as one of the distinguishing qualities of a writer. It cannot be denied that Sainte-Beuve had some taste for the sublime, since he has shown frequent traces of it in his "*Etude sur Virgile*" and in other essays; but nevertheless it was a taste to which he did not show a devotion of a much higher order than that which he bestowed on inferior kinds of literary beauty. Hence it is however, that he was enabled to rescue so many obscure writers and inheritors of unfulfilled renown from oblivion; for large is the number of writers and persons of small account in history; such *existences cachees*, as he professed, had an attraction for him, whose lives by mere force of human sympathy and elaborate care he has invested with attraction for the reader. His minute and fine manner of criticism is applicable equally to small and to great men, to small events and to great ones; it is in fact like a magic optic glass which would diminish great objects and magnify small ones till all appear of equal magnitude. There is a certain want of perception of the difference of proportion between one class of talent and another, a certain want of elevation of vision and fire and depth in the flow of his enthusiasm. His natural taste, indeed, was such as led him to prefer what may be called regulated and harmonious talents to extravagant and overflowing and even colossal genius. This natural taste was rendered still more predominant by culture; consequently in English literature such poets as Pope and Cowper, on both of whom he has written fine essays, were more congenial to him than Shakespeare or Milton.

Nevertheless, in spite of all shortcomings, he was a writer of European renown and of marvellous elegance, of wondrous fertility and inexhaustible energy. And whatever judgment may be passed upon the settled mood of scepticism into which he subsided during his later years, one cannot but admire the inextinguishable love of literature and genial sympathy with humanity which supplied to him the place of religion and animated him up to his death. As a pure man of letters it will be long, we imagine, before France, and perhaps even Europe, will produce his rival; he was an epitome of the finest culture of modern time.

From The Cornhill Magazine.
OUT OF THE FOREST.

A STORY OF HUNGARY.

I.

I AM Elspet Reiteck, born in the Bakon-
erwald, where I have lived all my life —
that is just seventeen years to-morrow, and I
have promised the good Father to write
down my story. He has given it me as a
little penance to help me to be less thought-
less and more grateful to the good God who
has made me so happy; for I am very
happy to-night, so glad and thankful, and
so full of a great joy that is singing always
at my heart, that I should not mind any
penance, however disagreeable, even if it
was to go to the Calvarienberg on my knees,
or to give my new ribbons and the old sil-
ver clasps for the shrine of Our Lady.
Yes, I think I should not like quite to have
to do that, because — because of something
that is to happen to-morrow! But, oh
dear! that is why I am so happy: it can
hardly be a penance to tell how it all came to
pass, and yet I shall cry before I have fin-
ished my story; cry with pity for myself, I
was so very very miserable, and it seemed
so sad for life to be all spoilt and over when
one was only sixteen, and there would be
so many weary years to be dragged through
by a poor little girl, who would grow
quickly into a sad old woman with a white
face, and eyes which could never smile be-
cause her heart was dead. I thought some
one had killed mine then.

I remember so well that first evening after
I came back from Pressberg. Father had
gone out to bed up the horses, for he had
the care of the stables that belonged to the
good Fathers, and of all the horses that
were needed for the forest work; mother
was mixing the meal for supper, and An-
nerl was busy with her pigs in the little
back yard. I was standing in the shadow
of the doorway, where I had been waiting
for half-an-hour, my heart beating with joy
at the thought that soon — now — in a mo-
ment, I might really see Guztav. How
well I remember what he looked like as he
came slowly under the great trees, like a
young pine, I thought, so straight and
strong and tall, holding his head high, and
looking out before him with those great
blue eyes that often seemed to me too busy
with their own thoughts to read other peo-
ple's, or see what was passing in the world
around him. I shouted "Guztav! Guztav!"
He started, with a little sudden cry of de-
light, and hurried towards the house; but
I could not wait, I had been waiting so
long, and I had wanted him so much all

these years; he had been my dear brother
all my life; he had called me his little sister
many and many a time, and so with all my
glad heart in my face, and with outstretched
hands, I ran to him and threw myself on
his neck, and, foolish little Elspet, really
cried, I was so glad to have him again.
But he didn't kiss me or hold me tight, as
he ought to have done; he coloured all
over his face and looked awkward and un-
comfortable; he took my two hands and
mumbled something, and asked me whether
I wasn't very tired after my journey.
Tired when I had him! Men are so stupid.
Something in my throat hurt me; I grew
hot and cold by turns; my heart beat; I
should have cried again if I had not been
too angry. "You do not care to have me;
you are not happy because I have come
back; you said I should be your little sister
always; you are changed, and hardened,
and spoilt; you are like a piece of wood,
and, oh! I am so dreadfully disappointed."
I couldn't help saying that, and then, be-
fore he could answer, I ran away from him
lest I should burst out sobbing and he
should see. How I wished I had not kissed
him!

I went to Annerl Demegerratt, who was
feeding her pigs: she took no notice of me
when I opened the little door of the back
yard; she was saying "chuck, chuck,
chuck," and the great hungry creatures
were pushing towards the troughs, grunting
and squealing, as they thrust each other
aside in their eagerness. I had never felt
so cross with the pigs before. Annerl
poured their food out of the pails she had
brought from the house: she was a tall thin
woman, who never seemed to grow old, and
had never been any younger as far back as
I could remember. She had a very un-
comfortable face and uncomfortable voice
— a voice that seemed full of protest, with
a wail of complaint in it, as though she had
never had a really good cry about her trou-
bles and got it over.

Annerl Demegerratt was father's half-sis-
ter; she had been married, but I never
remember hearing anything about her hus-
band, only Guztav and I had a fancy of our
own when we were little, that he had been
a miller, and was very fat and big, with a
red nose, and that he was always laughing,
and died of apoplexy: we made it up for
ourselves, and told it to each other till we
quite believed it. Annerl always had a
white handkerchief tied round her jaw, as
though she had the toothache, and I remem-
ber we used to think she wore it as a mark
of respect to the miller's memory, and that
somehow it was a sign of mourning. An-

nerl's one's happiness was her pigs; she was swineherd to the great Convent at St. Martinsberg—our St. Martinsberg, to which we all belong—and had a melancholy pride in her title and her occupation, but was perfectly hopeless about everything else. She was the last person to whom at another time I should have complained of my trouble, but I could not keep silent, and provoked with her because she would not notice me, but still cried, "chuck, chuck, chuck," I said suddenly, "I had forgotten how ugly pigs were; they look horrid, with their frizzy hair and their little mean eyes and their dirt; everything is horrid in the country; I wish I had stayed at Pressberg, I wish I had never come home."

It was mean of me to say that about the pigs, and I hated myself for it.

Annerl emptied her last pail, and then turned round and looked at me with the curious slow stare which was one of her characteristics.

"It don't matter," she said, "where you go or where you stay, 'tis a dismal world at the best; there isn't any sure comfort in it but the pigs. If you get to care about a child, it'll wear your life out fretting; if you set your heart on the flowers the fowls'll scratch them up, or if they grow and you gather them, they are limp and faded and good for nothing directly. But my pigs are always a pleasure: if you only feed them they grow fat and do you credit: they are pictures to gladden your eyes while they're living, and when they're dead every bit of them is good for something. When I'm very low and feel I'm not wanted, I shut my eyes and think of the pork, and the pig's fry, and the fat bacon, and that helps me. Elspet," she said with sudden energy, "you don't know what real trouble is, but I do." Poor Annerl, I thought with self-reproach, she must have been fond of that red-faced miller.

"When there was a talk of that measles at Raab, and they said it was spreading in the villages, and even in the forest, I said six *aces* at every station, and twelve *credos*, and went on my knees all the way to the Calvarienberg, to pray the blessed saints to let me take it and spare the pigs. They didn't heed me, 'twasn't likely they would, I'm of no account, I know: the pigs took it, and twenty-five of the biggest and fattest died. I thought it would have killed me, for I loved them; and besides, it went to my heart to bury all that bacon."

Annerl's voice was so melancholy, and her face so utterly dismal as she spoke, that she did me good directly. There are some

people who are so dismal they make you feel merry by contrast, and perhaps that is their way of being useful. I shook the tears from my eyes and laughed at her, and then begged her pardon, and helped to carry the empty buckets into the house.

Father had come by this time, and he and Guztav were sitting at the table. Mother put the supper down and bade us begin. Father said his prayer, and finished with "God bless Elspet," and then I felt sorry I had been so cross, and the thought that I was *really* at home again made me happy; besides, Guztav had said "Amen" with a kind, glad voice, and mother had kissed me as she put the porridge into my plate, and said—"Eat a spoonful, little daughter; thou must eat first, that brings good luck: when one has been on a journey, half one's heart is gone, but when one has tasted the old home food, then one forgets the past, and one begins to live well in the old house."

"It is so good, mother," I said; "nobody makes porridge like you, and I would rather be here than anywhere in the world."

"A crust tastes better under one's own roof than sugared cakes amongst strangers," said mother; "there's no comfort to my mind in eating when one has to say 'May it please you,' and 'I thank your graciousness,' with every bite: plain fare and plain folk and plenty of love in the sauce-bowl, and I'll warrant one will stomach the food. But what in the name of all the saints has come to Annerl?" cried mother, as she turned and saw her sitting on a stool in the farthest corner. The stool had lost a leg, and was tilted against the wall, and Annerl had to lean on one side to balance it; her hands were crossed on her lap, and her head hung dolefully on her breast.

"Ah! good people," she said, "don't mind me; don't let a poor, melancholy object spoil your appetites. I know I'm not wanted, and I know my place; the crumbs from your table, only the crumbs, sister-in-law, till I join my poor Josef in heaven: once, it is true, I had flour-mills, but that is over, crumbs now satisfy the poor dependant."

"Heaven send me patience!" cried mother; "come to the table, Annerl, and never mind the mills; there's porridge enough and to spare for us and ours."

"I wouldn't wish to take it from Elspet," said Annerl, without raising her head; "a daughter's right place is at home, and I don't grudge it her. I pray the good St. Antony to shorten my days, for I know I'm a burden, and a desolation, and a weak weary woman that'll not try your patience long."

"Fiddlesticks!" said mother; "there's your place and your porridge, that'll cool sooner than your welcome, as you might know by this time."

Father rose, and taking Annerl's arm, quietly put her into the seat beside him, saying kindly, "We won't cry over the meal to-day, sister-in-law; there's more in the barrel, and it's the child's first night at home."

Mother put down Annerl's plate — it was the fullest of all — but though she said, "A good digestion to you, sister-in-law," she couldn't help hitting the table with it, which made Annerl jump. Father is so gentle, but mother and I must say just what comes first, and if we mayn't speak we can't keep quiet; but father is just like the blessed saints — nothing but good words ever come from his lips: all dumb beasts love him.

When Annerl jumped I looked at Gustav, and we both laughed. He was ashamed of having laughed, but I was pleased to have made him. I always could when we were little; after that I began to feel quite comfortable, and as though I had never been away at all. After supper we all sat on the bench under the big beech-tree, and sang our old songs together. Father has a beautiful voice still, though it is not quite so rich and true as it once was. Mother sings too, and I sing and Gustav, and he plays on a violin, oh! such heavenly music, that the birds stop their singing to listen; and Annerl sings a little, only her voice is cracked, and thin; she always expects to be asked to sing every time we begin, and then makes a great many excuses, which is a little troublesome, because we like to sing out of our hearts without talking about it. Our Hongarisch songs are beautiful, and Gustav had learnt many new ones from the Zigeuners, who had also taught him to play fresh pieces of music — music that told you a whole long story, and made you cry and laugh as it pleased: sometimes the violin would scream like an angry spirit, as though it was dying of rage and its soul was bursting away; then it would talk with low, pleading voices, and grow comforted and pass into peaceful smiling sunshine, with long, sweet thrills of rest; then one heard little panting, sobbing words of love and entreaty, and songs like those the summer brooks sing in the forest, and then far away hymns of joy, till one's heart ached with the sweetness, while the notes soared into the heavens and fell softly through the air like a star. Gustav had been far into the country, amongst the Zigeuners, buying horses for the good Fathers: everybody

knows how clever they are in taming them. He had wonderful tales to tell us of his adventures, and of the wild people and their ways. Mother said they were always a handsome, brave race. I had seen them at Pressberg, where a band of strolling singers had come to the cafés, and my aunt had taken me and Caterina to hear them. There was a young girl belonging to them whom we thought the most beautiful creature we had ever seen. Caterina had said to me, "Are all the Zigeuner women as beautiful?" I remembered that now, but I said nothing, only wondered a little whether Gustav had thought so.

For several weeks after that I was very busy and happy; I felt good and pleased with myself; I helped mother in the dairy, for we had a great many cows to look after — a large herd that were pastured in the lowlands round us. All the butter and cream father carried twice a week to the great Convent of St. Martinsberg; we were its servants and vassals, as father's father and grandfathers had been for hundreds of years. There was a lay brother who came down sometimes to see that things were going right, and to count the beasts and look to the horses, but for the most part it was all left to us, for the good monks know we are to be trusted. Our house was large for peasants, and strongly built; indeed the poorer people about us called father, "farmer" and "master-overlooker," he was so much respected; and besides, so many of the wood-cutters, and the charcoal-burners were under his orders, and the teamsters, and if one of the bullocks was ill, it was always he who was applied to.

One day father said the waggon was to go to Raab the next morning, and as he wanted a message taken to the landlord of the "Goldene Krone," Gustav might as well drive it, and I should go too and look after the cheeses, for there were a great many ready for market. If father was a kind of bailiff to the Convent, Gustav was bailiff to father, and so they did everything together.

Gustav said, "Do come, Elspet," and then he coloured and pretended to busy himself with some sacks of meal.

I wanted to go, but I thought he might have said something more about it, so I said I was very busy, and I didn't know whether mother could spare me.

"That's a pity," said father; but Gustav wouldn't speak.

"The child can go well enough," cried mother, who came in at the moment.

"I don't think I care to go. I'm sure I don't — and I'm busy;" and I took up the

pile of plates for supper, and passed Gustav and his sacks without looking at him.

"Well, then, send Annerl," said father.

"Won't you go, Elspet?" said a pleading voice under the sack.

"Annerl may go and welcome for me," I cried; "but she knows nothing about cheese, and you said, mother, she was the worst hand at a bargain you ever met, her mind's set on nothing but bacon; but I don't mind: if you wish her to go, and she sells the cheeses at half their value, the loss is the good Fathers'; only it's a pity when they're such fine ones; but of course if you want to send Annerl——"

Father stared with a puzzled look in his eyes. "I don't want to send Annerl; I thought Elspet would like a day's pleasuring, and to sell her cheeses herself."

"Eh, eh, father!" said mother, laughing, "don't worry thyself by too much thinking; hast never seen the silly young calves when thou art feeding them? they never care for the milk till they have knocked the bucket over!"

"Of course I must sell the cheeses," I said; "if it's my place to go I'm quite ready; but as for the pleasure!"—and then I kissed father on both cheeks ever so many times, and felt such a little hypocrite, and so much obliged to him for helping me in spite of myself.

We started before the sun was up in the morning. I lit a fire and boiled some milk while Gustav harnessed the horses, and I helped him pack the cheese in the wagon with plenty of soft hay, and then climbed to the seat in front, where he wrapped me up so carefully in the great sheepskins, for it was autumn and the mornings and evenings were cold. We had to drive slowly at first, for the wood roads were bad for the horses' feet, with their loose stones and roots of trees, and were narrow too in places, and better fitted for the quiet bullock-teams than for our horses, who were driven three abreast, and danced and jumped about, being in high spirits with the freshness of the air and the pleasure of a holiday; for the wagon was so light that it was as much of a holiday for them as for me: so we were all happy together. Gustav and I chatted and sang, and he told me wonderful gipsy stories, and listened with the greatest interest to my tales of the life in Pressberg, and of the polite manners of the people and the grand two-storied houses, and of cousin Caterina; and I told him about the pretty Zigeuner maiden, and he said they had all the same dark eyes and hair, beautiful eyes like moonlight nights, and somehow then I

liked to hear him, because I have black eyes too. We talked and talked just as we used to do about everything that came into our heads—about the games we played when we were children, about the black mare that had sprained her fetlock, and old Czjzek who had thrown out a fresh spavin and was really getting past work, and the quality of the maize, and the new cow father had bought, and the harvest-service they would have at the Convent, and what a gay dance it would be this year, because the crops were so heavy; and I told Gustav that the hen-wife at St. Martinsberg had promised me a sitting of eggs, and I meant to rear some chickens of my own; the Madonna should have one for candles, but I meant to save all the rest of my money for new ribbons at Christmas; and then we talked about Annerl, and laughed at her doleful stories, and wondered whether she could ever have been merry and young.

"She couldn't have had her face tied up in a handkerchief when she was a baby," said Gustav, "and she wouldn't look half so doleful without that."

"Oh, but she did, you may depend on it," I cried; "she says she wears it for the toothache: I think she began it when she was cutting one, and she must have been just six months old;" and then we both laughed so that the horses shied and plunged about wildly and Gustav had to pull the reins hard, and said, "We must be serious, little one, or we shall never get through our business."

Oh, how pleased I was to hear him call me "little one" again; it was all just like before I went away; but I said, "Little one, indeed, Herr Waggoner! I am Mistress Cheese-Saleswoman to-day, and am to be treated with respect."

On which Gustav looked at me smiling: he couldn't speak, because he wanted all his breath for the horses, but something in his eyes made me colour—it was very stupid of me. So I fixed my mind firmly on the cheese, and tried not to remember it; and when the road grew better, and the horses went more quietly, I opened a basket and gave Gustav a great piece of black bread; for the fresh air, or the laughter, or the early start or all three together, had made us hungry, and the drive seemed quite to have changed Gustav: he wasn't silent at all, or shy, or stupid, he treated me as if I were really little again, and might be ordered about; and when I gave him the bread, he said I must feed him, because the horses pulled so he wanted both hands for the reins, and he was too hungry to wait: so I gave him great bits, as

though he had been a chicken, or an old hen, and when the waggon bumped suddenly, I hit his nose or his chin by mistake; but he didn't mind that, and it only made us both laugh the more. When we came in sight of Raab, and the houses, and the church towers, I made my face look very grave, and puckered my forehead, that I might look old and clever, and show people that I was not to be imposed upon, and Gustav gave all his mind to the horses, and made his long whip crack beautifully as we dashed through the town. We both felt very important and anxious, for Gustav had a great deal to settle with the landlord, and I had all that cheese on my mind.

II.

It was past noon before all our business was well over, and then we were hungry again, and were ready for dinner. They gave us a beautiful meal in the second hall at the "Hotel Krone." There was one big room filled with little tables, at which the visitors sat — gentlemen and ladies, and very many Hungarian officers and high officials. While we waited it was very amusing to see all the people who came in and out of the hall, and called for wine and food: travellers in strange foreign dresses, peasants, like ourselves, from the forest, boatmen and dealers from the river, huntsmen in gay liveries, and the shopkeepers of the town who came in to dine together at a long table. The landlord had invited us to stay and eat as his guests, being a kind-hearted man and pleased with his bargain, which if it had been good for us was good for him too.

"A trusted servant of the good Fathers of St. Martinsberg has always a welcome here, so drink the health of the little cheesewoman in some good red wine, and eat your fill, and my humble greetings to their Reverences."

There was a very grand company at the table — the apothecary, and the doctor, and the seedsman, and a jäger from Castle Z—, and two or three soldiers, and four lay brothers who dined off vegetables and put the meat in their pockets, because, though it was a fast day, they might still enjoy it on the morrow. We did not think much of them, for they belonged to the monastery in the town, and we were vassals of the great Convent, and looked down on the Raab monks; for our abbot is like a prince-bishop, and all the lands as far as you can see belong to St. Martinsberg. I sat by a good woman from Waitzen, whose mind was full of trouble about her son, who had been mixed up in a fight, and

was now in prison. She cried now and then as she talked to me, and wiped her eyes very often with her napkin, although her tears fell faster than ever when the brown bread pudding with the eggs was placed upon the table, as she said it was her poor darling's favourite dish; she had a second helping of it, but that was, perhaps, for her dear boy's sake.

"Keep a good heart, mistress," said the little seedsman across the table: "I wish you good speed, and success to your son," and he emptied his glass.

"I thank you truly," answered my neighbour; "but what can you expect? He has offended against the law, that is too true, and the law has him. It is just as when one snuffs out a candle, puff! one is held fast, and the light and brightness is over."

"Get the saints to help thee, or a holy Father; there's more ways than one of lighting a candle again. Why, a friend of mine lost ever so many of her hens, and she vowed sixteen candles to the Blessed Mary, and a cushion stuffed with pig's hair, and put a fresh padlock on her yard door, and she never lost as much as a feather afterwards."

"Ah!" said the Waitzen woman, "that may be; but it isn't much good to me, for we're Protestants, and have nought to do with your candles and *aves*."

"What's the odds?" said the little seedsman; "our Lady's as kind a soul as ever lived; besides, she'd do you a good turn and never miss it. Take a new sitting of eggs to your monastery, and get one of the Fathers to consider the matter, or find out who is the judge's mother-in-law, and whether she likes honey. Bless the woman, don't fret, keep up your appetite, and say an *ave*, and use your wits—that's my creed, and you'll get along somehow."

Gustav whispered to me that the seedsman was not to be depended on. He had a good digestion, and believed in nothing, and talked like that to make people think he was clever.

I think no one should speak of our Blessed Lady with a jest; people should love her all the more because she is so good, and not try to impose upon her. I said so to Gustav, but only in a low voice, because I was afraid of the seedsman, and of speaking before so many people.

The apothecary told funny stories about the Viennese, whom he knew intimately, having studied chemistry for a year in Austria, and being able to talk German with ease. I should be ashamed to talk German — no true Magyar would wish to; but still

the apothecary's stories were very amusing; and then he had seen our beautiful Queen, walking simply in the Prater, and holding her little son by the hand. Ah, holy saint Elizabeth! how I love her. My heart seemed to grow warm as he spoke, and I longed to cry, "God bless her!" Gustav drank to her health, and I said "Amen" to myself, like a little prayer, when he put down his glass.

When dinner was over we went into the town and looked at the shop windows; they were not very gay, but in one there were some prints for sale, and, to our great delight, we found a picture of Annerl's "St. Anthony;" such a quaint, odd picture—a very old man with a crutch and a long beard, and a very little black pig by his side, like a feeble old swineherd who had grown good enough to go to heaven. There was a bright glory round his head like the sun, and as we were so happy we determined to be extravagant, and we bought the little picture. I had a silver piece to give, and Gustav paid the rest. It was for Annerl to hang by her bed.

Then we set out for a long walk by the promenade and streets and the old fortifications, walking slowly and stopping often to look about us, and talking as we went. At last we came to the side of the river where the old wall made a resting-place, with some steps that led down right into the water. I sat on the highest step, and Gustav lay on the grass beside me; he took out his pipe and lighted it, and we made little jokes together and were very merry, and he smoked silently and I sang softly little children's songs half to myself and half to him, listening to the splash of oars as boats came by idly drifting down the stream. How long we stayed there I cannot tell, but the sunlight which had been warm upon my head at first, grew fainter and drew away quietly into the sky, where it deepened and reddened, and fell with a golden glory on us again. Gustav's yellow hair shone like gold, and his face was bright like the angel who comes to Tobit in the picture of the Convent chapel; there was a new look in his eyes, he put his pipe on the grass and laid his hand on one of mine that rested on the step beside him. I felt half frightened: a strange joy crept into my heart, which fluttered suddenly like a little caged bird. I could not turn away from him, though I did not want to see his face, nor try to think what it told me. What little wind there had been all day had fallen and there was a great hush and stillness over everything—that tender peacefulness which only comes when the tired day is going to sleep and

night is hiding her gently, covering her with her cloud-curtains and singing her to rest; a pale light, soft as a primrose, filled the sky and held its sweetness like a prayer; tender roseate clouds sailed slowly towards each other and grew together and deepened into purple islands that caught fire from the dying sunlight, and blazed along their edges and sent little quivering flashes of light upon the river, where red and violet and golden ripples chased each other into dark corners, and changed their tints and brightness with the changing movement of the water and the clouds. Suddenly a nightingale from the bushes near us sent out a long, low note, and then a plaintive trill of music, a little sad lonely jug, jug, jug! and then a clear sweet song of uttermost love and happiness, that soared far up into the air and then fell back softly, like gentle, blessed dew upon my heart. I could not bear it; I had been so often cross and impatient, fretting against my life, and now it was as though my guardian angel was coming to me in the silence, and in her hands was a censer full of perfect joy. I put my head down on Gustav's hand still holding mine, and cried for very happiness, and Gustav kissed me—very softly: his lips just touched my hair, and I think he said, "Dear little heart, I will love thee so truly, so help me God!" and I looked up at him with my face all wet, and saw his dear honest eyes full of tears too, and I answered, "I never remember the time, Gustav, that I did not love thee."

Then he kissed me on my mouth with a grave earnest face, and we sat there silently, only the nightingale spoke for us, each to the other; and the great red sun sank lower and lower, and as the light faded Gustav and I knelt down hand in hand on the grass by the old broken wall, by the reeds and the water-lilies, and said our *ave*, and I thought that the angels were saying theirs too, and that perhaps even our Blessed Lady cared, and was glad that little Elspet was so happy.

And then it was time to harness the horses, and we went back to the "Goldene Krone." I don't think that either of us said a word as we drove home through the forest. It was very odd, but it did not seem so to me then.

III.

AH! I wish I might stop here; I should like best not to write another word but just of prayer and thanksgiving. I don't know how to tell of the weeks that followed that one bright, golden day of my life when I sold my cheeses! All the days

after were like a still sweet dream. It was not that our lives went on differently from what they had been before; there were still the cows to be milked and butter to be made, and the meals to be got ready, and Gustav was busy with the horses and the farm-work, only somehow the golden light I had seen in the sky and the water as we watched the sunset by the Danube seemed to live in my eyes and make everything beautiful. When I was making the butter the churn said, "Gustav loves you, loves you, loves you;" the kettle sang it on the fire; the birds put it in their songs when they were the sweetest; my own heart said it always through the stillness, and the whole world seemed full of light and joy. And then I was so proud of Gustav, not most because he was stronger and taller and handsomer than any of the young men of the forest, but because, with all his strength, he was so gentle and so good to those who were weak and ailing and unhappy; so patient with Annerl, who always aggravated me, and so watchful over father, saving him all the hard work he could, and letting father think he was as vigorous as ever, because the strong, loving arm helped him so quietly, he only saw the joint labour and rejoiced in it without knowing who had borne the greater toil. Mother was never one you could do for, but I liked to see how much she thought of him, and how she loved to measure his height against any of the lads at the harvesting, and to hear her say, "Our Gustav would be a rare pole for a vineyard, and any plant that's tied to him will find shelter and sunshine;" and then she would give my ear a little pinch or stroke my head, and we both knew what little vine meant to grow there, and how bright and glad it would be.

Sometimes, when I began to think, I would sit still and let the knitting fall on my lap and dream as though all the world were asleep; but oftener I wanted to be always running about singing and laughing and talking to everybody because I was so happy.

Father would say, "Why, Elspet, my darling, thy sunny face will save candles for winter!" and mother would look at me with a shrewd kindly smile.

"'Tis easy to see where the oil comes from that keeps that little wick burning: shine away, Elspet, it'll hold out like the widow's cruse, and the more you use it the more there'll be. I've kept a light burning many a year and it's never grown dim yet, eh! father?"

And mother would kiss me, and father, with his hands in mine, would say, "The

Lord has been very good to us, and the candle that He has lighted He will surely gladly see brightening in heaven."

"Amen," said mother; "but not yet awhile, please the saints: there'll be wax-lights in the old sockets, never fear, when we get up yonder. I'm not so pious but what I'd use every bit of it here, and well I know it'll last our time; and as for the young things who have just lit their taper, why they've got the light in their eyes, and think it's just the biggest illumination ever mortals heard of. Ah! there've been moths and candles since the beginning of creation, and there's no likelihood of either coming to an end that I see."

"Pork-fat, sister-in-law," said Annerl, in her slow voice, breaking into our talk — "pork-fat well strained and poured into moulds will make them beautiful, six to the pound: they're fit for St. Bridget herself; but what is there those blessed pigs ain't good for!"

"You do find them a consolation most times, sister-in-law," said mother grimly; "and I won't deny that fresh bacon of our own feeding is wholesome eating."

And then Gustav would look in for a moment before going to the faggot-pile, and so I would draw my hand away from father's and run out to collect the billets for the fire, and Gustav and I would forget all about them and stand by the wood-pile looking at each other, and pouring a great deal of fresh oil on our two lamps. They burnt so steadily with such a true pure brightness: ah! how little I could have thought of the darkness that was so near!

One day Annerl, who had been to the great Convent with fresh eggs, came into the living-room just as we were all sitting down to supper; she looked more woe-begone than ever, and her voice had a deeper gloom in it.

"You're tired," father said kindly; "it's a long walk, Annerl: didn't the hen-wife ask you in and let you rest?"

"It's not my body, brother-in-law, it's my mind," she answered. "As I went in at the yard-door I saw a picture that reminded me of the past: there was a young girl sitting on a door-step, singing and feeding the fowls; on her shoulder stood a little chicken pecking at the spotted neck-erchief she wore, and as she threw the grain to the greedy creatures she sang. Just so, brother-in-law, I sat a many many years ago singing to the chickens, when I first saw the miller in the door-way — my poor Josef, white as the angels and carrying a sack like a begging-friar! I looked at

the girl; she was young and gay just as I was then; I had worn a neckerchief of that very pattern, and it might have been I who sat there and sang and sang;" and Annerl in her cracked voice began to sing, rocking herself backwards and forwards in mournful accompaniment to the rhythm:—

We may spin and weave, and cry over the thread,

For weary goes the world, a-weary!

Men take our spinning and forget the hearts that bled,

Forget the busy hands till they're all cold and dead,

And weary goes the world, and dreary.

"Do you mean she really sang anything so doleful as that to a chicken? What a shame! It was enough to take away its appetite. Are you sure it pecked afterwards?" I asked Annerl, pertly enough.

Annerl shook her head sorrowfully. "It was I who sang that, a long time ago to another chicken, and it died with the pip the day after! I was always unlucky and worn and weary; but I eat my bread thankfully with a heavy heart, and if it's bitter I know it's my portion."

"Bitter! sister-in-law," said mother, fairly in a pet. "I won't pretend that brown bread's the same as white loaves, though you may look at it through the mill-man's spectacles; but if you ever find a sour batch of *my* baking I'll eat the crust to my own portion; my bread is as sweet and as wholesome as Saint Elizabeth's, and maybe more nourishing into the bargain, seeing that her flour, however it was mixed, turned to nought but roses. Thou'rt welcome to all thou can take, Annerl, as many's the time thou'rt heard it; but never say the spoon thou'rt eating from is made of bad metal, or maybe some day thou'lt find it has stuck to the pot!"

"I spoke in a spiritual sense, sister-in-law," said Annerl between sobs; "in a spiritual sense I am free to say that my food disagrees with me, but it would ill become me to speak as to the quality of your baking; I eat in silence, sister, and know my place."

"Eat in comfort," said mother, "and the more the better; while we're here we're meant to enjoy our victuals and relish our bread, and thank the good God if any extra butter finds its way to our slice!"

Guztav and I were very merry over the new hen-girl at the Convent—"Annerl the younger" we called her; and a week after I was well content that mother wanted me to carry something to St. Martinsberg, and with a basket on my arm I set off up the

hill; the morning was fresh and beautiful and I went along gaily, sometimes stopping to gather the wild-flowers that grew at my feet or to eat the ripe berries that clustered in the bushes. It was a clear, still day, so clear that I could see far away in the glades of the forest the happy wood creatures at play, the white rabbits at their hide-and-seek behind the drifts of dead leaves the last night's wind had blown about the roots of the trees, bigger and older ones shaking their long ears gravely and munching any green shoots they could reach; the brown squirrels darting up the old pine-stems, or running races among the beech-trees, and sitting up with their great soft tails curled over their backs while they ate nuts and gossiped; the birds that circled in lower flights and perched upon the branches looked at me curiously with their bright friendly eyes; above there was the blue sky through a pattern of tangled brown and golden leaves, and in the distance purple haze with long rays of light shining through it, and another embroidery of shadows, soft grey tracery over the moss and the short grass and the coloured stones upon my path.

What beautiful colours there are in everything when the heart is light and the eyes are clear enough to see them! The edges of the leaves were scarlet, as though the fingers of the Autumn had just pressed them as it passed, and the beech and oak leaves were brown and curled and twisted as if they had tried to turn aside from its greeting; and I could see little points of blue and crimson and violet in the rocks under the plumes of fern, where sprays of greenery swayed gently in the air, and dark shining ivy twisted itself amongst the yellow grass.

I could write a great deal about our beautiful great Convent, which is almost as big and strong as a fortified town, and looks so grand, crowning the hill with its towers and terraces and wide courtyards; but what would be the good, for everybody knows how grand it is, and how strong. I stood still for a moment when the walk was ended, to enjoy the fresh strong air, and get my breath again, and far, far below me lay the wide plain, and the forest, and the great river. Of course I could see it all; but the only thing my *mind* saw was a little clump of pines in the Bakonyerwald, which grew close to the farm, and I said; "Guztav is working there, and thinking of me. What a wonderful thing love is! I am so little, and the world is so wide, and yet my heart feels so large, as if its gladness could fill all this great wide plain, and make it happy."

I had spoken the words aloud, and a quiet

voice answered close to me, "Yes, little one; and so God's love fills the world that He has made, and therefore there is no one, however poor or lonely, who may not rejoice in His mercy."

I turned half-frightened, but it was only my kind Father Athanasius, the good Father who taught me when I was a child, and has always heard my confession. I had not told him about Gustav, but it would not surely be difficult to do that; it is so easy to confess what only makes you happy; even if I should have to say that I had thought about him all through the mass, and that I had felt vain of myself, and pleased when old Zena said I had the prettiest eyes in the forest and she knew who had found it out. Then, too, I could say that I had never once forgotten my prayers, because now there were always so many things about Gustav I wanted to pray about, and I liked to thank our gracious Lady every hour. I think being happy *makes* one pious, so that it must be a good thing; and, perhaps, that is why the saints can never sin in Heaven, because they are too glad and blessed. I thought all this, but I did not say a word.

"So you have brought us something from the good mother," he said, touching my basket. "Go and talk to the women in the fowl-yard presently; and how is the farmer? Ah, there, indeed is a good man! And Gustav—what of him?" And the kind eyes smiled at me full of questions.

"We are all well, most dear Reverence," I answered; "and the dun cow has a calf, and there are six pigs fattening, and mother says they'll make prime bacon, and I sold all the cheeses;"—and then something made the colour come into my face, and I looked down, and thought it must be time to go to the hen-wife."

"And so you sold the cheeses, little Elspet," the good Father broke in, "Why, you will soon make a good housewife, and want to manage a house for yourself. Is it to be Hans, or Stefan, or one of the woodrangers?"

"Oh, Father," I cried; "you *know*. Gustav and I have always made our pilgrimage together; and, when we were little children and gave our offering at the shrine by the three roads, the same candle did for both; our dear Lady knew we were poor, and that it was one heart that gave it! Dear good Father, I will make you my little confession here;—see, as I kiss your hands: it is one heart still, Father, for Gustav and me."

"The good God bless you," he answered kindly; "for surely the birds who build their nests may praise Him as truly as they

who serve at His altar: our psalms, it may be, are all the sweeter for their singing." He spoke in a low, quiet voice, and there was a dreamy look in his soft kind eyes, as he too gazed down upon the great world at our feet, and then: "All the earth doth worship Thee, the Father Everlasting—the All-father, who lovest what Thou hast created, and wiltest the happiness of all men."

I think he had forgotten I was there, for he took out his breviary and read softly to himself; and I stole away to the little arched door which opens when one puts one's finger through a hole by the latch; and so I had no need to ring, and came quietly, in a moment, into the fowl-yard, and there was the same picture Annerl had told us of.

A background of old brown stone buildings, deep-arched windows, behind which were stores of grain and sweet-spelling hay; bits of cord stretched loosely from one mullion to another, on which flax was hung; strings of onions under the broad, low-hanging eaves of the fowl-house; a great dovecote, with deep red tiles on its pointed roof, that ran up into a point crowned with a wooden shelter for the big bell, and with a long frayed rope hanging by its side, which came out from a little hole in the wall; a soft flutter of pigeons with white wings beating and feathering against the deep blue of the sky; a doorway, with pails and an idle broom, and a smell of hot meal porridge coming from within; a great cackle and scratching and clucking amongst the chickens and defiant crows of conceited-looking cocks; and in the midst of all the noisy bird-life, a still figure sitting on the doorstep, singing, with the sunlight full upon her face. It was Annerl's picture, but painted in such different colours as I saw it then.

I don't know how to put into words what she looked like. I thought she was the most beautiful creature I had ever seen—dark, passionate, loving eyes, with a yearning sorrow in them that melted my heart; a face that was like nothing but a dark clear pool on which the sun and the clouds bring changes; so, in a moment even, I could see her heart send changing lights and shadows across the pathos of her eyes; a sweet tender mouth, masses of black hair wreathed round her head and fastened with a big silver pin, quiet, lithe hands that lay listlessly on her lap, or clasped each other with strength. Not like me, I thought—I, who am so quick, and changeable, and careless!—Oh, not at all like me; so much steadier of purpose, so far stronger, so

very beautiful! Why it was I cannot tell, but even in that first moment I could not help comparing our two selves with a strange pity in my heart, for some one, only not for her!

She sat looking at the blue sky and the whirling flight of the pigeons, and singing in a sad, soft voice —

Blow, thou soft west wind, where he I love is sleeping, —

Sing truly, sweet swallows from the far western sea;

For all lone and dreary his sad love is weeping,
And the east wind, the strong wind, shall bring word to me.

Thou east wind, that one word, one love word art keeping, —

Cry through the forest like a storm bird on the wing;

For all lone and dreary his sad love is weeping,
Hung'ring for the message thy strong true song shall bring.

Then suddenly she stopped, and seeing me, rose and came towards me with a smile of welcome. I was going to tell her my errand, and to ask for the old hen-wife, who would want to hear of my mother, and how the younger broods were faring, for we had a new breed at the farm, and were proud of our pullets, when something in the face before me carried my memory back with a sudden leap, and I cried, "Why, you are the Zigeuner maiden who sang in the café! who would have thought of finding you here?"

I spoke without thinking what effect my words might have, never dreaming how they might move her. Her beautiful face turned white, even to the lips, and the eyes filled with tears! she came forward a yard or two with an entreating look in her fawn-like eyes, with her hands half extended timidly: then suddenly her mood changed, she laughed, a gay ringing little laugh, her face cleared and grew firm in a moment, and taking my basket, she said: "You have brought something for Tante Anna; I will call her, and you must come in and rest. It is not strange that my face reminds you of an absent one, others have told me the same. I do not believe in ghosts or in double spirits, else you might persuade me that mine has been wandering. The little hen-girl of the St. Martinsberg singing at a café! Holy Saints, there would be a scandal! You should not say such a tale even in joke, the pigeons might hear us and tell it again. Come and rest yourself, and eat some porridge."

She was so gay, so careless, so loving, she perplexed me by her change of moods,

and by her strange resemblance to the gipsy at Pressberg, about whom Caterina and I had talked so much. But before we had been together half-an-hour I had forgotten it all, and had grown so fond of the hen-girl that I made her promise to pay us a visit in the valley, and to tell my mother some of her stories of her own parents, and the wild castle of Prince Z——'s, and about the old jäger who had taught her to sing. Her home was in Transylvania, she said, amongst good, quiet people, but she had been living with an aunt who was a laundress at Waitzen, and she had spoken of her to a cousin of Tante Anna's, who, now that she was getting old, needed help with the poultry, there were so many of them, and picking the birds was work enough for a pair of hands to say nothing of the feeding and cleaning. Marie, that was her name, was so bright and merry, and told so many amusing stories, and was so earnest I should stay, that I lingered long at the Convent, and the sun was setting when I set off on my homeward way. Marie went with me for the first mile or two, and when we parted we embraced and promised to meet often; and I thought, "Next time I will tell her about Gustav; perhaps she is also betrothed, and then we can talk of our lovers together. He must be a Transylvanian, and he cannot certainly be half as nice as Gustav. There is no place like the Bakonyerwald and the good dear folks who live there."

Ah, how beautiful the forest was that evening when the sun had quite gone away and the red light faded from the topmost branches! the trees looked so grand and solemn in the dim twilight, everything was still, a little frost was come already, and the dew that had fallen was crisp, and the leaves had curled themselves up more closely than ever; the birds were gone to bed and were sleeping under all their feathers, well covered up by their tails and their wings, as we are under *duvets*. It made me laugh to think how the robins and the thrushes must try to wrap their tails round their legs when the frost pinched their little toes just where the wing-feathers wouldn't quite reach; the squirrels, I knew, were well off, rolled in a round ball like a muff, all warm fur everywhere, and then the rabbits! — well, their ears would help, and then there were always so many of them they would keep each other warm; and so I chattered to myself, my head full of pleasant little silly thoughts; and as the wood grew thicker and the darkness deepened, I was forced to slacken my pace somewhat and choose my way; and then I heard a

step among the crackling leaves, and Guztav's voice, and in a moment he was beside me holding both my hands, and with his head very near mine; though it need not have been, for we were not at all the same height. Perhaps though, as the light was so dim, it was the only way he could see me.

"My little wood-bird," he said, in his strong tender voice, "the mother has been wondering what had become of thee, and so I came to see. Were you loth to come home again, Elspet?"

"Why do you ask such silly questions? Suppose I had been to an enchanted castle where there was a beautiful prince, and the prince had said, 'Elspet, I will make you a princess;' do you think it likely I should ever want to come home—do you Guztav?" and I pinched his hand a very little.

There was a young moon that night, and as it rose higher in the heavens, its pale, sweet light shone between the leaves and made our faces bright again. Guztav kissed me on the forehead, where, he said the moonbeams had made a glory, and called me his home saint, his dear, blessed little Elspet, his good angel, and many another sweet foolish name; and then he wanted me to tell him again how I loved him—as one asks the tiny children, who open their arms and say, "So much, and again so much, thousands of worlds." I remember so well how the light shone on the trunk of a large beech-tree, and threw our shadows on the grass, and how Guztav turned my face towards his with his caressing hand, and kissed me very many times, and said, "Confess, tell me truly, tell me what is in thine heart."

And I answered, "I have confessed already, and am happy and shriven. I have made my confession to the good Father, and have no need to open my heart to thee." And he said, "But only repeat thy confession that I may shrive thee too. Tell me, little Elspet, what didst thou confess to the *Geistliche*?"

"I love Guztav."

Ah! how that pleased him. I saw the gladness in his face, and so did a little bird peeping over the edge of its nest and looking at us with kind eyes; and so we walked through the wood and thought it was Eden, and forgot everything but our two selves.

Mother was cross with me for staying so late, and said that though I was betrothed and Guztav was like a husband, still it was an ill habit for girls to get into of strolling about by night: "Moonlight or not," said mother, "girls are best at home and wives at their spinning when the sun's down." But her forehead soon grew smooth again,

and she asked after Tante Anna and her rheumatism, and listened to all I could tell them of my day at the Convent, and of the beautiful new hen-girl. Mother said it was a good work of Tante Anna's to look after a girl like that; she would be out of mischief up there, and she might not have been if she had stayed in the towns; and that reminded me of my first fancy, and I said to Guztav, "She was just like the beautiful Zigeuner I saw at Pressberg, so like that I thought she must be the same, and I told her so."

Guztav started and looked at me with a strange perplexity in his honest face.

"But she said she was from Transylvania, and laughed at me, and told me wonderful stories of her home and her parents, and the old *Schloss* where they live; she can talk like a book, and her tales make you smile and cry at once. I asked her to come to us here and talk to you: she would make even Annerl merry."

"You asked her to come here!" cried Guztav, and then stopped. I looked at him amazed; he seemed so odd and so strangely disturbed about nothing; but he said he must see to the horses, and went away suddenly, and I being tired and sleepy, forgot all about my new friend, and went to bed.

Another fortnight passed, and nothing happened that I need write about here. Guztav and I talked of the time when we should have a home of our own, and whether I should make good bread and porridge, and how he would play his violin while I worked; and we spoke of the animals, all the good beasts whom we were so proud of, and of our love, and the Christmas feastings, and what fields were to be sown with grain for the summer; but sometimes Guztav seemed half-dreaming, and answered me at random, or not at all. There was a change in him, and it vexed me to feel it was something so indefinable that I could not grasp it and ask him its cause. But I knew in my heart that across our clear sky had come a little cloud, no bigger than a man's hand—still it was there.

What a rain of tears was to fall—what a darkness to cover my world—what a shadow of loneliness and death! And yet I hardly felt its approach, standing in the sunshine of my glad, blessed happiness.

IV.

WHEN next I went to St. Martinsberg the trees were bare, and a light powdering of snow was on the ground, but I didn't mind that; the cold air made my cheeks burn and sent a pleasant tingle of warmth through all my body as I hurried along the

steep path. I had put on my silver ornaments and the broad belt with the onyxes which grandmother had brought with her from Transylvania, and the red ribbons in my hair that Guztav liked; and I thought he would come to meet me again, and I would hide and make great snow-balls and pelt him from behind the trees. I must not stay to write about half my thoughts, or of the peace and quietness of the still winter-scene; if I say so much about everything I shall never come to the end of my penance. Only what I saw when I reached the great Convent, will it be necessary for me to tell. I had opened the little arched door in the wall very quietly, and there I stood transfixed, leaning against the stones and looking at a new picture in the fowl-yard.

There were the pigeons as before, wheeling round their tower, with little cooing cries to their mates within the nest; there were the defiant cocks, the bustling, scratching mother-hens, the big spring-chickens, the geese fattening themselves for Christmas, the brown door-way, the scrap of deep blue sky where the colour always seemed to deepen in the corner by the bell-loft; but a tall young forester was standing with his back to me, wrapped in one of our great sheepskin coats. On her knees before him was Marie; — all her black hair hung about her shoulders — the thick braids dishevelled and loosened — her eyes looked large and worn with weeping — her mouth palpitated with sobs. The face, with its dark paleness, its pure passionate beauty, brought vividly before me the old Pressberg memories, in spite of her Transylvanian dress — the shirt and the grey silver ornaments, and the brilliant *obrescha* with its red fringes that spread over her white dress and swayed with restless movements on her body. Her clasped hands held one of the man's with earnest entreaty, and she spoke rapidly in a language I could not understand.

"The Zigeuner!" I whispered, under my breath, certain now that my first impression had been the true one, as I stood quiet from very astonishment. Her companion answered her: "Dear Lueska, do not be so unhappy. I shall always care for thee; always watch over thee."

Then she spoke again at first in her own tongue; but as though she feared he had not understood her, she added in Hungarian, "But without love I shall die — I shall die!"

"Thou shalt have that also; only be patient," he replied, in a deep soft voice. And then she threw herself on his shoulder and kissed his hands passionately, with wild words which I could not understand — I,

who had understood too much already; for the soft voice was one I knew well, the caressing hands had clasped mine — how often! The tall forester was my lover; and in the broad felt hat that he wore still hung the little purple ribbon I had placed there for good fortune, and the scarlet ribbon for joy.

A great sickness and faintness came over me, but I still kept before my mind the one thought to get away — to hide in the forest, to hasten to shelter like a wounded fawn who goes into the woods to hide her hurt: all sense beyond the one pressing need of putting distance between them and me had left me. How I walked or ran along the path I cannot tell; but at length, weary and footsore, I sank upon a little bank of dead leaves in the depths of the forest and faced my sorrow.

Guztav was like others of whom Annerl had told me, with tender words and a false heart; that gipsy-girl must have bewitched him in the far-away time when he had been with her people, and now she had come here, under her shallow disguise, to be near him. A hundred little things came flocking into my mind, half-words of Guztav's, half-thoughts of mine; put together now they seemed to mean so much. Great God! how I had loved him; he had been the whole world to me, and all the time, all the time, he had had that other face in his heart, was dreaming of it, cherishing it, even when I had believed I was reading his very soul.

In a moment my world had crumbled into ruins: my beautiful fairy-world of pleasant thoughts, of air-spun fancies, of sweet day-dreams, and, worse, my real world, the home-life, the love, the entire trust, the blessed content, the wife's faithfulness which I would have given; and, heaven! — ah! that was what made me the most wretched — it was all gone, too! I believed in God's love no longer, or in the blessed saints' goodness: even the Divine pity of our Lady of Mercy had been turned from me. God could not help me, I knew, for I could never trust my Love again — my love, my love! And then I wept great tears of agony, sobbing for the pitifulness of it, that I could never, never believe in him again. "O death, come for me!" I cried. "Dear death, take me away into some quiet place where I may sleep and never dream!" I wept there on the ground, with my face buried in the dry brown leaves, for a time that might have been hours. I could not tell: I thought over all the past — the deceit, the treachery. I never asked, Can it be true? I knew it must be; and slowly

I grew hard, and then the wild pain at my heart deadened. I rose from the ground and smoothed my hair, and passed my hand over my face; it seemed to have grown fixed and old. I felt as though the time when I had been happy had been very long ago. Quietly I walked home through the wood, passing the great beech-tree where the moonlight had once thrown our two shadows on the grass at its foot. My breath came a little quicker, with a quiver of pain about the heart, but I felt harder and stronger, even for such a memory as that. I made some excuse to mother to account for my not having visited the people at the Convent, and then washed my face and braided some fresh ribbons in my hair and went about my usual work. Mother looked at me a little wistfully, I thought, and father started when I spoke to him. I could not help it, but I knew my voice had changed; it was thin and dry, and the colour had gone out of it. Annerl came in, and Gustav, who spoke to me as usual. I was quite calm, my pulse did not beat the faster for hearing his step; my face I knew was quiet and pale, my heart was dead, and I was beyond being sorry any more.

Another week passed; often Gustav would try to speak to me in the dear old fashion with little tender words, but I answered him coldly, strangely, with hard eyes that I knew never faltered, which would never, never, melt for him.

"Annerl," I said one day, "do you ever think how long you may have to live? Don't you wish the time would go faster?"

It gave me a dismal pleasure to feel that I could talk to some one to whom life had always been dreary and forlorn.

"Don't you hope you will die soon?"

Annerl gazed at me with a look almost of terror in her lack-lustre eyes, with open mouth, and hands that shook as she stretched them towards me.

"For mercy's sake, Elspet, don't talk to me of dying! I'm not so old as you think; there's a deal of life in me; please St. Anthony, I may live to a great age: we always were a long-lived family, and I've heard mother say her grandmother was bedridden for twenty-two years, with no more sense than that milking-stool, and lived to be a hundred!"

"But you say life is so doleful, Annerl; aren't you tired of it?"

"Tired of life? Why, Elspet, you must be talking in your sleep; whoever heard of any one being tired of life? It can't be any pleasure to be laid out stiff and cold, while the neighbours gossip over

you and drink their wine, and tell lies about you that you can't contradict."

"But heaven!" I said, "surely, for those who love it, there must be rest after all the weariness here."

"Heaven's all very well," answered Annerl, "for meek pious souls, who go smiling through their work whatever happens, and can sit through a sermon an hour long, and feel it does them good in their stomachs; but I'm that restless, I couldn't stop on a gold seat if I was set there. One must have something to work one's thoughts upon. I've been so long used, you see, child, to things being contrary, that I think it would put me out dreadful to have everything go just right; and then there are the pigs, and I'm so accustomed to being dismal, that it's worked round, so that I feel a kind of pleasure in it, or at least a satisfaction. No! St. Bridget be praised, I'd like to outlive all my faculties down here, and when I've no wits left, and am too blind to see the maize grain or the pigs' troughs, and too weak to grumble, the Holy Mother will manage the rest; and by that time I shall be too old to care where she puts me!"

I turned away sad at heart. I, too, might live to be a hundred; just a hard shell with a withered heart like a dry kernel, and no one would care for me, and no one would have pity; for the saints would quite forget a poor little girl who prayed to them no longer.

One day I was ironing on the long wooden table under the window, smoothing carefully the pretty muslin aprons mother and I wore over our dark blue gowns on Sundays, when I heard voices, and peeping round the swinging shutter, saw old Tante Anna sitting by mother on the bench by the door, and both in earnest talk: she was a queer little old woman, who looked as if she might once have been tall, but was now all head and legs, like a water-raven; she wore high black boots, strong and thick enough to resist all the wood morasses, her short dark petticoat just reached below the knee, and she wore an over-skirt divided at either side, a sort of long blue apron bound with scarlet which hung down before and behind, and over all the heavy sheepskin coat with its thick fur turned inwards, and a black fur collar round her wizened old throat, which was tightly muffled in the large white wrapper that was folded round her head.

"I don't like the looks of it, neighbour," Anna was saying. "My cousin from Waitzen vouched for her, and it was on my word that she was engaged at the

Convent; but if I told you the half"—and here the old head nodded emphatically, and I lost some words—"I have my ears open, neighbour, and my eyes, and that girl's a *heathen*!"

Mother crossed herself, and said, "It's best to be charitable in speaking of others; young girls are foolish things, and you may have misjudged her;" for mother had heard she came from Transylvania, and that made her heart yearn over her I knew.

"Charitable," grumbled Tante Anna angrily, "when one's own character's at stake, too! Why, only yesterday she refused to go to confession, and I hear her muttering strange words to herself: if she's praying to the saints, they belong to another calendar. She was as bright and clever and willing as need be when she first came, but she's under an evil spell now, it's my belief. One moment she's merry, and the next weeping, and then she rambles on with her strange words when she thinks no one hears her. The girl's bewitched; and where should I be if some day the Devil carries her off on a broomstick, with all the best eggs in a basket? Ah! it's easy to laugh, but that's what it'll come to."

And then another voice joined in: "You may talk of spells and witches with reason; they're in the air somewhere, and they've laid hold of Elspet: she's pining and wasting like the girl of Raab, whose wicked cousin kept a wax doll in a cupboard that was her very image, and stuck pins into it till the poor thing would have died if the magic work hadn't been found out, and put a stop to. Why, Elspet, who used to be the merriest girl in the Bakonyerwald, is so changed you'd hardly know her. She asked me last week if I didn't wish to die! Somebody has been sticking pins into something that has to do with *her*."

"Silence," cried mother; "who dares talk of witches and evil eyes in the same breath with my child's name! An idle tongue makes a sore heart, and that's the worst style of pin-sticking ever I came across."

"Don't be angered with me, sister-in-law; I'd bite my tongue out before it should say an ill word of Elspet. Don't I mind when she was a little baby, a small toddling girl that used to coax me to let her feed the pigs and have the smallest to play with. It's a weary, weary world; but it wasn't altogether worn-out and good for nothing while our Elspet was in it with her bright eyes and merry laugh. But since the spell fell on her, what little sunshine was left us is all clean gone."

"And thy wits after it," said mother.

"Girls are changeable, and have their odd fancies and likings, as other young things. It's time Elspet grew sober; there's her marriage to be thought of, and when she's a house and a husband to care for, she'll have little time for idle fancies."

"Husband indeed!" grunted Tante Anna: "as to that, marriage don't always mend matters, and some husbands are worse than none."

"We have a son to thank God for," said mother; and they spoke of other things.

It seems to me, in looking back, as if I was often now hearing the others talk, catching stray words and looks and piecing them together in my mind, as though I were busy over some strange embroidered story quite apart from myself and studied the pattern curiously from my distant standing-ground. It was partly that a habit of silence seemed growing on me and that I went about my work mechanically, so that my idle mind was listening to others, and overhearing much almost insensibly to myself.

One day it was mother's voice talking to Gustav at the wood-pile.

"She has such a strange fixed look, it troubles me, my son; has anything come between you? It wearies me to watch her, and my heart aches when I see her sad eyes."

"She never looks at me," Gustav would answer; "she hardly speaks. I, too, see how pale and thin she is, and how she is changed. Can the heart change too, can love die out of one's life? I will go away if it is the thought of me that troubles her. She shall be free again; I will never urge my love upon her."

Yes, very willingly he would go, I knew that well; most readily would he give me my freedom!

"No, no, Gustav," mother answered, mastering her voice with an effort, "the child is ill; pay no heed to her fancies; she is restless, as young girls will be before they bind the yoke on their shoulders. I wouldn't trouble her with many words; keep out of her way a bit: you give your wild ponies a long rein till they've worked off their shyness."

Another evening it was father who spoke. "Mother, what's come to Elspet? the girl's wasting away."

Mother did not answer: she was sobbing. I remember that I felt a vague wonder that she should be so moved: she who was always so brave and cheery. I was near enough to hear all they said. In the old days I should have been ashamed to listen, now I never knew that I was doing so; the words came to me like the other strange sad

things in my life, in which all things had lost their relative place and proportion.

Mother cried for a long time, it seemed to me, and then father said very gently, "Don't fret so, dear heart; let us tell our Lord the trouble, and He will help us." I heard them kiss the old wooden crucifix that hangs by the chimney, and then the murmur of a prayer, and then father's voice again. "Some trouble has fallen on the child: there's a fever upon her; but whether it's one the saints have sent, or man's wickedness has brought upon her, heaven only knows! If I thought it was Guztav—" and an angry word burst from father's lips.

"Guztav!" cried mother; "he worships the ground she treads on, and is nigh distraught about her; she'll hardly speak to him, and he's breaking his heart over her coldness; the poor boy hasn't had an appetite for a week past."

I moved away then and heard no more; but the next morning father said to me very tenderly, "Little one, wilt thou not tell thy trouble to thy old father? Thou art troubled, my child; is it that thou hast ceased to love Guztav?" I answered him with a laugh and a hard jest, and would have pity and help from no one.

Tante Anna came again like an evil old bird, croaking out her tale. "Witchcraft, neighbour; you'll believe me at last: she's begun to lay her spells now on another." And then she muttered in mother's ear.

"I'll never believe it, never. He's good and true; do you think I don't know an honest man when I see him? Never dare to say such words again. I wish you a good even, and the longer the road grows between here and the Convent, the better I shall be pleased."

"I shouldn't have spoken, neighbour, if I hadn't had your good at heart: it's my belief she's a worthless huzzy; and as for that piece of perfection of yours, you're welcome to make the best you can of him. Bad's the best, neighbour, bad's the best!"

Still repeating her doleful refrain, old Tante Anna shuffled away from the door. I knew it was all true, and that Guztav was often at the Convent now; I learnt it from many a little thing too slight to speak of here.

There came a day when Guztav spoke to me of the change that had come. I had gone to the well to draw water, and he met me there suddenly, and taking the pails filled them for me silently. Guztav was never one for many words, but he took my hand and said sadly, "Elsbet, what is it, will you not tell your trouble to me?"

I felt my face turn white; but I did not tremble: nothing could move me now; only I drew away my hand and stood quietly looking at him. I remember the earnest pleading of his face, the sorrow in his eyes, as one sees grief or love in a picture or an image, a thing apart.

"Elsbet, what has come between our love?"

"You ask me that!" I cried; and suddenly with a fierce bound my heart seemed to break out of its prison,—"you dare to ask me that! Listen! I despise you, I hate you, I have forgotten you: let me go!"

Horror-struck, he stood as though I had stabbed him, but did not attempt to detain me, and I walked with swift steady steps to the house carrying my pails. I did not see Guztav again for a week. Father said he had gone away about horses, but he sighed as he spoke. Mother's eyes were often red now, though I never saw her cry. Annerl seemed changed; she helped mother quietly in a hundred different ways, talking less about herself, and praising her pigs as though she wished to be pleasant and make cheerful conversation.

I could not sleep much, or eat enough to satisfy mother; hopeless, aimless, lonely, my sorrow seemed greater than I could bear. We had wild weather about this time: the wind would howl through the forest as though the wild huntsman and his dogs were abroad; it came in great gusts against the house, and shook the strong rafters, and dashed itself against the walls till all the pitchers were jangling, and we were shaken in our beds. It came with a roar like an angry spirit gathering strength in its fury, and howled and shrieked and battled with itself, and then died away in long, sobbing cries, in pitiful moans like a creature in pain. To my highly strung overwrought mind the voices of the wind brought agony: I would bury my face under the clothes and stop my ears, but I could not shut it out; it seemed, as though my own misery had taken form and was mocking at me in my terror. One night I had been sleeping and woke suddenly, startled by a slight noise like the closing of a door—or a movement at a window. I rose, and opening the shutters quietly so as not to rouse Annerl, looked out into the night. There was no moon, but the sky was clear, and I could see two figures standing near the stables,—two blots of darkness in the gloom, as though the brooding shadows of the night had intensified themselves in those vague shapes, which to me were so full of misery; for one was Guztav: I knew him

in a moment by his great height, and the slouch of the shoulders. The other was a woman: she was talking eagerly, and holding his hand and looking up into his face. I could not see hers; only the outline of the slight form, the small head, the glitter of the coins that rested on her hair, and, as the wind blew against them, the flutter of the long fringes from her waist. It was the Zigeuner maiden. I was not surprised or angered at the sight, only, sighing heavily, closed the shutters and lay down again: but I could not sleep any more.

V.

FATHER said the next day that Guztav would be home by another evening at latest. We breakfasted early, for it was a feast-day and a great holiday, and Caterina was to come from Raab, where she had been staying with the wife of the apothecary, to visit us and join in the pilgrimage to St. Catherine's shrine: for it was the 25th of November, and the blessed St. Catherine was the patroness of our wood chapel, and of the church of the next village; and far away in the valley was a shrine and a holy well, whose waters were very good for rheumatism or fevers, or even for sore eyes and the tertian ague: indeed they helped in almost anything. Mother said, "What they were good for, depended on what you wanted cured; the blessed St. Catherine could not be expected to work a miracle for you till she knew what you really needed."

St. Catherine's day was a favourite holiday with every one. Soon after the sun had risen came a waggon from Raab with the apothecary's wife, who was a little pinched-looking woman with a thin red nose. She was accustomed to high life, and was very gaily dressed in a bonnet and shawl like a lady from Pesth; she had brought her two children,—a very troublesome boy of eight, and a little six-years-old daughter with a round, fair face,—and with her was Caterina. She was so glad to come, so pleased with everything, kissing everybody, asking a thousand questions, praising mother's coffee and the delicious cream and butter, delighting Annerl by her raptures over the *Palestine* pigs, coaxing father, caressing me, and bringing such a flood of happy nonsense, of health and good spirits into the house, that I felt as though I were waking from a long, miserable dream, and determined that for this one day I would be happy and try to think I was a child again.

Four horses were harnessed to our waggon, two abreast; and Hans, one of the

farm-men, in his new suit of white frieze, gay with bits of bright ribbons and embroidery, and his hat decorated to match, mounted, reins in hand; then the apothecary's wife was carefully lifted in; she was to sit in an arm-chair that had been fixed in the centre, and all the rest of us were to be packed in the hay. Mother fenced herself in with a big basket; Annerl sat on one side of the chair with her knees drawn up to her chin; Caterina and I balanced ourselves on the edge of the waggon, with our feet in the hay, and the two children between us. Father was by Hans in front.

We went along quietly enough at first. The apothecary's wife and Caterina were a little sleepy after the long drive in the dark morning from Raab, but Fritz, whose great delight was in mischief, tickled Annerl's legs with long straws and grasses, which made her shriek and draw up her feet so suddenly that she hit her chin. This feat he repeated several times with the same invariable result, to his intense delight, and his shouts of laughter were echoed by Caterina, while I vainly tried to look shocked at his conduct.

"Saints and angels!" cried poor Annerl, "this hay must have grown on an ants' nest, or St. Vitus is punishing me for my sins. There it is again! Why, my poor jaw will be black and blue before we reach Szenckindorf."

"Can't you move a little?" said mother. "It's the seeds in the grasses, perhaps it'll be better farther along."

"I'm wedged too tight," said poor Annerl, "with the Frau Apothecary's chair."

And here a sudden lurch of the waggon, as the wheel struck against a large stone, sent the Frau Apothecary, chair and all, upon Annerl's back. A vigorous pull from mother restored both to their places; the horses were going at a steady gallop, when crash!—a wheeler had shied, and the waggon bumped against a tree, tilting up suddenly, so that Annerl was now on top of the chair, and mother was under it; and so on we went with many a merry shake and jumble, bump, crash, creak!—Hans smacking his whip, father shouting to the horses, little Fritz joining lustily in the din, while Caterina and I tried to hold on, and were sometimes flung violently into the air, sometimes thrown into the bottom of the waggon, often almost to the ground, as Hans would suddenly stop to greet one and another company from the farms about the forest, and then dash forward in a neck-and-neck race with a neighbour's team.

At Szenckindorf there was a crowd of carts and horses and people, the carts

standing under the trees, with the horses picketed about them; and on benches or on the grass in front of the little inn, were hundreds of peasants: the men in new white woollen dresses under their great sheepskin coats, some with strong leather jackets and waistcoats and belts like their horses' harness and broad slouched hats; boys in round caps with gay-coloured ribbons, or pieces of silk stitched on to them; head-jägers or master foresters in dark purple coats of fine cloth braided and tasselled, all in the strong high Hungarian boots; old women, like flocks of Tante Annas, with grim faces, in big boots and sheepskin coverings. The men were smoking, and each had brought his gayest pipe, the great white clay-pipes with little paintings of the Danube and the Cathedral at Waitzen, or a serving-girl with a glass of wine; their wives were in gala dress, with white or purple or dark-green handkerchiefs on their heads, with a brave show of old silver ornaments, and wearing stiff muslin aprons over their dark dresses.

There was a perfect chorus of welcomes as we came up. "Good-day to you, neighbour: a fine Christmas, and good luck for the year!" "We kiss your hands, neighbour," to mother, "and the Frau Apothecary's." "I wish you joy of your wedding: where's the bridesgroom, farmer? What! no time to spare for the Holy Well! — that won't bring good fortune."

"Drink with me, neighbour, a full glass and a merry heart!"

"Long life and short trouble!" cried another. The glasses clinked, the red and white wine sparkled in the sunshine, with the kind faces, the honest welcome, the pleasant friendliness. We descended from the waggon and joined the groups of eager people. Mother was stiff and had to hold on to me at first, and I felt almost happy again with her arm round my waist and her loving face so close to me, as she said,—

"I greet you all heartily, neighbours. One's joints grow old ahead of us; we've no cause to *feel* so while we've got the little daughters round us yet;" and she pinched my cheek; and old Mother Georg Max nodded and smiled, for father was filling her glass.

"There's some children that it would be a pride to grow old alongside of; and everybody knows that Marget Reitch's Elspet is just her looking-glass, and two handsome faces are better than one any day. Here's your good health, and a salutation to the blessed St. Catherine;" and the old woman tossed off the wine.

Amongst the crowd of joyous people and

the din of voices I had watched over little Roserl, and now that mother had found a seat on the bench, and Fritz had joined some boys at their play, I took the child in my arms, and gave her cakes. She was an odd little thing, I thought, pretty and fair, with great blue saucers of eyes that seemed too big for her face, and with sunny hair plaited in one long tail which hung down her back. Caterina was playing all sorts of monkey-tricks and talking wonderful nonsense to the old women, keeping the youths in a state of perplexity between delight at her fun and merriment and awe at her grand bonnet and air of fashion. Little jokes were flying about, the air seemed full of happiness and light-hearted raillery; suddenly there was a hush. "Silence, silence," cried several voices. "Here's his Reverence!" "We kiss the hand, holy Father!" "Finish the bottle quick, Hans!" "Gretchen, where are those candles?" "Good-morrow to your Reverence!" "Hush, hush, attention there!" "Now, children, on your knees and ask a blessing. Jacob Palugay, give me the baby." "Peter, where's the cannon?" "Now, Martin, you begin, you're the leader!" "No, it's your place to-day!" And so on, in endless variety, till the quavering voice of the old priest bade the pilgrimage begin.

Mother had taken out of her basket a packet of candles, and she gave one to each of us; and Fritz brought a long flaming piece of wood, and was enchanted at being allowed to light them, amidst many cries of "Don't drop the sparks!" "Take care of the muslins. Blessed St. Anna, the baby's smoking!" "Thou wicked boy, thou hast burnt thy little sister's hair, smell it, how it frizzles!"

Quickly we all fell into order, two and two. I walked by Caterina, still feeling the terrible past to be a dream; but as the first notes of the chaunt sounded I remembered the old days long ago when we were children, when Guztav and I had sung together, walking in that same procession, shouting with all the strength of our little throats, and very much inclined to titter, only we were afraid that if we laughed and shook our candles we might let the grease fall on our new clothes.

The brightness died away, and I felt the old pain at my heart, and the shadow stealing over my face; but I did not think any one else could know it, till a small hand slid into mine, and little Roserl's blue eyes looked up at me wistfully, as she said:

"Mother wanted to keep me, but I am going to walk with you, because you look as if you wanted some one to comfort you."

The little child's words were so sweet, as dew must feel when the ground is parched and dry. I stooped down and kissed her, and burst into a passion of tears. I had not cried before, since the day I had been to the Convent.

We walked slowly along the path, crunching the hard snow with our feet, shading the candles with our hands from any sudden breath of air that threatened to extinguish them, and chanting the psalms in what fashion we best could; but as one end of the procession was a good way ahead of the other in the matter of time and union, much could not be said for the harmony: though there was at least a great deal of noise. And when we halted, as we did very often, and the old cannon was lowered from the men's shoulders and fired once, twice, thrice! it was really very imposing; and who knows but it may have pleased the good saints?

At a sudden turn in the road we met a number of peasants from another village waiting to join us, who quickly fell into rank. There was one figure bending over a psalter that I should have known amongst a thousand; it came like a sudden discord across the prayers that filled the air. I turned my head away; but in a moment a hand touched mine, and Marie's voice said,—

"Elsbet, will you not speak to me? I was so glad to think I might meet you: I have not seen you for so long, not since the day you promised to love me."

I shook myself free as though from a serpent. "Do not touch me, do not speak to me; you are false, and I know all!"

But she would not leave me. As I spoke, I felt a sudden quivering in the fingers that touched my arm.

"For the sake of all you love," she cried in a whisper, "do not betray me."

"It is you who betray, Marie, you who deceive; you have stolen my love from me. Ah! it is *you* who betray!"

She made me look at her, at her flushed face, at her bright indignant eyes.

"Elsbet, by the soul of my mother! you wrong me and yourself. Only trust me, only have patience, only love Gustav always; he is true and sure."

She had turned away to her own place amongst the long line of women. "Only trust!" I repeated; and my eyes sought the broad silver ring of betrothal Gustav had given me, and the old Saxon words engraven on it, "*Treu und fest*." I dared not think, but yet the words were there; the voices seemed singing them, the air was full of their sweet promise. I saw them in

the sky, in the frosty tracery of the leaves, on the snow at my feet; and then we stopped at the little shrine, the priest gave us a discourse, and there were more prayers and chants and a benediction: but I heard little and heeded less. The old well was a pretty sight beneath the overhanging bank of snow-covered grass, where sharp-pointed rocks forced their way through, wet with the little rills that ran down their crevices and brightened their colours and the curious veinings of their stone, and where a fringe of brown ferns and long grasses and trailing ivy, sparkling and encrusted with diamonds, hung down towards the well. The spring of fresh, clear, delicious water bubbled up from the depths of the soft earth, which was rich with the damp masses of fallen leaves and green moss and pine-sheaths, and where in summer wood-flowers love to grow. Now there were only frost-flowers, beautiful stars, and fairy trumpets, and rings and spears that glittered in the light. The children shouted with glee, and played with the little wheels they had made of straws, and which turned round in the water, where, a few feet below its source, it fell over rough stones and pebbles large enough to make it foam and dance against such sudden obstacle.

The candles were all burnt out but every one had brought a cup or a glass with them to drink at the well; some a bottle to take the water home with them for an ailing child, or a sick cow. I knelt down when my turn came, and put my lips to the cool stream and drank a long draught. I felt somehow as though it would wash my heart, and cleanse and heal it; the sky looked bluer, the sun shone brighter. I thought, as I rose again, of the old words *Treu und fest*, and dipped my ring into the water and kissed it when I thought no one was looking.

The short winter day was almost at an end when we started in the waggon for home, and the cold had become intense. Father sat on the side-rail now, but he made the rest of us nestle down into the hay, and covered us with sheepskins. Little Roserl fell asleep in my arms; Caterina sang; mother and the Frau Apothecary nodded towards each other and groaned in their dreams when we came to a very bad bit of road; Fritz lay on his face and kicked the back of the cart to keep himself warm, and tapped with his fingers on the soles of Annerl's feet, and pretended to be mice, till she woke with a shriek and declared that six big rats had run away with the best of the cheeses. Father held my hand; I rested my head against his knee, and we were

both very quiet. Another waggon came behind us with ten or a dozen of the forest lads laughing and singing.

"I never saw them home on a festival as early as this," said mother. "Caterina's bright eyes will have to answer for it! It's a good thing anyhow; and those who stop feasting betimes will have to fast less on the morrow."

But it couldn't have been Caterina, for when we came to the four cross-roads we lost sight of them.

VI.

AFTER such a day every one was glad to eat a hearty supper and go early to bed, only first Annerl and Fritz carefully hung the little water-wheel on a hook over the pigs' house. We used to make them when we were children on St. Catherine's day, and bring them home carefully; they would cure warts, and keep the weasels and other vermin away, folks thought. I don't think father believed in them much; but mother used to say it was best to err on the safe side, and it cost nothing to keep them.

Annerl and I had given up our room to the Frau Apothecary and her children, and we and Caterina wrapped ourselves in warm rugs and skins, but she liked best to be with me. A strange excitement kept me wide-awake: if I closed my eyes, I only heard Marie speaking; life didn't seem over any more, there were great wonderful possibilities in it. I did not think of them as joyful ones, indeed, I could not *think* at all; I only knew that something had broken up the terrible numbing frost, that I was young, and warm, and living, and that I was glad to be so."

Everything in our home was very quiet; the fire smouldered in the stove, there was a smell of burnt chips, and a little heap of grey ashes on its top, where the kettle had been hung to boil; the big table had been pushed aside, and Caterina and I had curled ourselves up close to the hearth. Annerl lay flat on her back on the long shelf that went round two sides of the room; you might have sat down upon her without finding out that she was anything more than a hard cushion, except by her snoring, which was very melancholy—the saddest, dismallest sound, as though she were telling her sorrows to the ghosts, and mightn't put them into words. Caterina's pretty head rested on her arm, and the light from the bars of the fire shone on her face, her little delicate pink ear, and the long brown lashes, and lit up her bright hair. Now and then the wood gave a faint crackle, and a few

sparks would fall out upon the hearth; sometimes it would blaze up for a moment, throwing quivering rays into the dark corners of the room, till the rows of wooden toys on the higher shelves seemed to spring into sudden vitality, each having a strange character of its own: there were the six horses I had watched father carve in the long autumn evenings, and the big cocks and hens, and Noah, and a great many of his animals. Noah's wooden face had a new expression on it—a grim smile, as though he had begun to see dry land somewhere. I thought of him and the birds and beasts, and wove them into a strange story that was half in dreamland. I sat up and rested my head upon my hands, and watched them with quiet sleepy eyes.

Suddenly the silence was broken by the sharp report of a gun. I sprang to my feet and roused Caterina. There was a cry, shouts, angry voices, wild screams, and oaths, and sudden shots. Father flung on some clothes, and ran to the door; but the sounds had come from the back of the house, and Caterina and I, rushing into my room, threw open the shutter, and strained our eyes into the darkness. We could see nothing, only there was a sound of hurrying feet, of a fierce hand-to-hand struggle, of blows, outcries, and then a low moaning and shouts for help.

"Let us go, Caterina, it is horrible to stand here; let us *do* something."

"Elspe! " said a voice out of the darkness; "Elspe, are you there?"

"Mamie! " I was dumb with a new fear.

"Elspe, listen; I am going away with my lover, my brave gipsy, back to my own people. There was a villain of a Zigeuner who wished to be my husband, and who bought me of my father—my own father, who dared to sell his child! I had to fly and to hide myself, for Miskah was away, and your Gustav helped me. I had tended him when he was with our tribe and his arm had been broken, and he was grateful. You were kind to me once, but you would all have hunted the poor heathen girl if I had told you the truth. I have waited for Miskah till my heart was sore, but your Gustav told him of my shelter, and in return we were able to warn him of the coming danger. The Zigeuners are crafty and sure: if your horses had been stolen, Gustav would have been ruined. I have betrayed my people; but my heart was full of revenge and of gratitude, and it made me speak,—still, I am sad at heart, Elspe, because of that. Wish me good fortune; kiss me once again for the sake of

the good I have tried to do you, for the sake of your own sure happiness."

What was the sound that made us tremble more than with cold? A murmur of voices, of slow crowding feet, a sense of men bearing a heavy burden, a low thud as of something laid upon the floor, a flash of lights, words, sobs, and awful silence — and there before the fire, with his white dead face turned towards me, lay my one love whom I had wronged!

Oh, Gustav, Gustav! Will time ever make me forget that night — the misery of it, the despair — the blood slowly dropping from his side, the pitiful stony silence of the eyes!

"Shot through the heart!"

I don't know who said it, for as I fell on my knees at his feet, a merciful forgetfulness came over me and I thought I had died with him.

VII.

BUT it was only the misery and the wicked pride and jealousy that were dead; another life began for us both; and oh, I am so thankful it began here and not only in Heaven! During the many weeks while Gustav lay ill and weak after the ball had been taken from his side, and when the doctor could not say whether even then he might not die, how I prayed to the great God, to our Lady of Mercy! I must have wearied her out, only she is as patient as pitiful. Long hours I spent at the Calvarienberg on my knees crying to the dear Christ, to the Blessed Mother, by the memory of all her sorrows, to think of mine; praying, too, to be forgiven because I had been so wicked and mean, and distrustful, — such a horrid little Elspet. Oh dear! I deserve a great deal worse penance than this, though it has not been very easy to write down all about my bad thoughts; and I could not have done it all if Caterina had not helped me, not about the thoughts, but the spelling and the long words, for Caterina is very clever, and has learnt to talk English and good German when she was maid at the Count Stefan Karolyi's. The good Father will say it is not a real penance if one is helped; but then if I had written very badly it would have been like a penance for him if he ever reads my confession.

But, oh! I am so happy, I cannot write any more about the time when we were miserable; so I only will tell about Christmas eve, for that was quite the end of it.

Gustav sat in a big chair with his head resting on a cushion; Annerl had made one and stuffed it so determinedly with her best pig's hair that it was as hard as a board, and so I

just put one of mother's feather pillows on top of it, without hurting her feelings by saying so. He was such a pale weak giant now, this poor Gustav of mine. I sat on a little stool beside him in the pleasant glow of the fire. Mother came in and out preparing things for the festival, and smiling at us with kind eyes.

"Oh, Gustav," I said; "I'm so glad we are not in Heaven! It isn't wrong to say so, is it? The world seems so beautiful and so full of joy."

"A fool's Paradise' Tante Anna called it," said mother; "but what does she know about it? — a crabbed old hen-wife that never had chick nor child."

"The first man and woman the good God made," said Gustav slowly, "he put into Eden. They must have found it beautiful also, with the gentle beasts and the garden to see to. That was how the world began, and they called it Paradise because of their love for each other;" and one of the big wasted hands was folded over mine.

"Dear heart," said mother, "the world went pretty much then as it does now, I'm thinking. Adam and Eve must have been good, simple bodies, as the priest used to tell us when I was a girl and we young ones weren't content with our victuals, — 'Think of your first parents,' he would say, 'who lived on herbs and green stuff, and never tasted meat except on saints' days. But I'm thinking when good mother Eve had children of her own, with healthy appetites, she must have found it hard to get along without porridge;" and mother carried her big bowl to the back kitchen.

It was Christmas eve, and there was a strange quiet over everything. Annerl and Hans were away at Raab buying stores for the morrow, father was out with the horses, and mother, I knew, would not come in again just then. I put my face down on Gustav's hand just as I had done once before, — so long ago it seemed, — and said,

"Do you still care about me and love me? Are you sure you have quite forgiven me, Gustav? I am so poor and mean and am not strong at all. I am afraid you will be disappointed in me."

And he answered:

"Dear God knows we are weak and feeble, and that is why He loves us so truly, because He forgives so much; it is He only who has to forgive; and He knows, too, that *together* we are stronger, better, happier, and so He has given us to each other: listen, Elspet!"

I raised my head: the sweet Christmas bells were ringing far away in the forest.

"Mother was right when she said the world hasn't grown old or changed. We two, my little wife, my own dear little heart, will go through it bravely hand in hand, and God will talk to us, and we will try to serve

Him. The bells will ring as sweetly to us when we are old and grey."

Ah! I am so sure of that now. The bells rang far away in the wood, and in my heart!

A MILITARY work on the Rhine fortresses, by Herr von Widdern, is much talked of just now at Berlin. The author says that the Rhine from Bale to the Murg is not fortified at all, and that the only defence of South Germany and Austria against a French attack in that direction is the strong fortress of Ulm, occupied since 1866 by a mixed force of Bavarians and Wurtembergers, amounting to 10,000 men. This force could in case of war be augmented to 25,000 men, and 25,000 more could be stationed in an entrenched camp within the walls of the fortress. Rastadt, which, it is expected, will present a formidable obstacle to the French advance, lies in a valley through which runs the river Murg. The defences of the town consist of three large forts, which command the surrounding country, and are united by walls. The southern and western forts, called "Leopold" and "Frederick," are on the left bank of the Murg; the northern fort, called "Louis," on the right bank, where there is also an entrenched camp capable of holding 25,000 men. Rastadt is four miles from the Rhine, and the intervening country is covered with woods, so that the fortress could not prevent an army from crossing at that point. The next fortress is Landau, which formerly consisted of three forts — one to the south, one to the east, and one to the north-west, separated from the town by marshes on the banks of the little river Queich. The southern and eastern forts have been recently abandoned, and the only one kept in a state of defence is now the north-western. The most important and the best situated fortress in this district is Germersheim, on the banks of the Rhine. It commands a considerable stretch of the river on both sides, and practically closes it to an enemy as far as Mayence and Coblenz. It would greatly facilitate the advance of troops into the Rhine palatinate, as two or three bridges might be thrown across the river, besides the floating bridge which already exists there, under cover of its guns. It would also form a basis of operations for the left wing of an army posted on the line of the River Queich. Mayence, one of the most important of the Rhine fortresses, is commanded by some of the adjoining hills; this has rendered it necessary to multiply the fortifications in the town, and there is, in consequence, hardly room enough for a large garrison. The whole of the country between Mayence and Bingen is now strongly fortified, and between it and the mouth of the Main (on the opposite bank of the Rhine) there are three large en-

trenched camps. As to Coblenz, Herr von Widdern says that it would require a force six times as large as the garrison to besiege it with any prospect of success. An enemy would probably begin the attack by opening fire on Fort Alexander from the hill known as the Kuhkopf, where his troops would be sheltered by the woods. The author also describes the fortifications of Cologne and Wessel, but adds nothing to what is already known on the subject.

Full Mall Gazette.

TEA and coffee, though often found in juxtaposition on the breakfast table, are not by nature allied to one another. Dr. Gardner has therefore made a curious discovery in having ascertained that the leaves of the one plant may be substituted for those of the other without any considerable loss of the peculiar properties belonging to the tea plant. Twenty years ago Dr. Gardner made the result of his experiments known to the public, and succeeded in attracting the notice of many merchants and chemists to the matter; but the coffee planters, fearing that the price of the berry would be lowered by the employment of the leaves, contrived to divert from it all general attention. "But," says the doctor, "the other day on passing a grocer's shop where a large variety of teas were somewhat ostentatiously displayed, I noticed that one chest, labelled 'Assam tea,' had a very unusual appearance. I purchased some, and found it to be prepared coffee leaves. The leaves are in small fragments, not rolled, being too harsh and brittle for that operation, but convenient for measuring with a spoon, and yielding a strong, pleasant infusion," acceptable to the poor because of its comparative cheapness. Without disputing Dr. Gardner's taste, we must still condemn the dishonesty of the transaction. Chicory may be palatable enough, but the same law which forbids it from being sold under the name of coffee should defend the customer from buying coffee when he wants tea.

Full Mall Gazette.

A GERMAN translation of "In Memoriam" has appeared, under the title of "Freundes-Klage." This is the first attempt to render Mr. Tennyson's poem into a foreign language.

From The Gentleman's Magazine.
THE EDINBURGH REVIEWERS.

SYDNEY SMITH.

WHAT would the world be without its wits? Perhaps we might dispense with an epic poet or two. I should not die of a broken heart if all the works upon metaphysics and political economy were to disappear to-morrow. A few of us might possibly survive the extinction of the whole race of three-vol. novelists; and I, for one, should not be quite inappeasable in my grief, if the *Times* of to-morrow were to announce that by some mysterious and inexplicable accident on the part of the Librarian of the British Museum, the mass of second-hand literature which now rears its front of brass against gods, men, and columns, has shared the fate of the MSS. Library at Alexandria. But Sheridan and Colman, Charles Lamb and Douglas Jerrold, Curran and Sydney Smith—what would life be without these? Abolish all their epigrams, all their *bon mots*, all the relics of their wit, make it penal to quote a single sentence from any of them, compel every man to manufacture his own *jeux d'esprit*, and what would life be worth? How should we contrive to get through a single dinner party? Who would have the courage to look at a single newspaper article? How would the House of Commons get through a debate upon Law Reform, Irish Land Tenure, Life Peerages, or Primogeniture and Entail?

To take an illustration or two. Suppose it a penal offence to quote, or to adapt, Sydney Smith's epigrams on Lord Russell, Dr. Whewell, and Macauley, to talk of a man of superabundant self-confidence as a man ready at a moment's notice to take the command of the Channel fleet, or to cut for the stone; to tell Professor Huxley, for instance, that his forte is cutting up monkeys, and his foible cutting up men; to compare the librarian at Lambeth Palace to a book in breeches, or to talk of Mr. Gladstone's flashes of silence. Suppose every parson under an interdict never to apologise for an inappropriate text by citing the authority of the Canon of St. Paul's for the use of "Cappadocia, Pamphilia, Phrygia, and all the regions round about," so long as the sermon was sensible; or to sneer at Dissenters as people who never keep a carriage in the second generation. Suppose the editor of the *Times* bound over in 10,000*l.* never again to throw out a suggestion about locking up two or three Bishops in a railway carriage, and squeezing them to death in a tunnel, in order to encourage the House of Lords to take up the question

of Railway Reform; to talk about putting round men in square holes, and square men in round holes; or to tell a poet or novelist, in a slashing criticism upon his first work, to run his pen through every second word in his MS., in order to add to the vigour of his style; suppose the Rochefoucaults of the *Saturday Review* interdicted talking of benevolence as one of the instincts of the human heart, with the alphabetical illustration of A no sooner seeing B in distress than he thinks C ought to do something for him; suppose the Lord Chancellor to issue an order under the Great Seal against any of the officials of the Circumlocution Office vindicating the use of red tape as one of the grammars of life, or that the Lord Chamberlain were to request the comic papers to forego for, say, the summer months, the exquisite gratification of sneering at the *wit* of Mr. Duncan MacLaren and his kilted colleagues, and of the necessity of a surgical operation to get their own jokes well into a Scotch understanding;—suppose Sydney Smith and his jokes, and all his wild nonsense, in short, put in an *Index*, what a sense of intellectual dearth and barrenness would pervade all of us! You might as well take the ozone out of the sea breezes, or the hydrogen out of the atmosphere. Shut up Mr. Bates and Mr. Odger in Pentonville, or compel them, if they must divert themselves with a species of amateur conspiracy, to enter into a conspiracy of silence; set down an epicure to a dinner of herbs; refuse the Book of Nehemiah to an Orthodox Dissenter; take away the chasuble and the stole from a Ritualist; commit any outrage of this description, and the victims may submit with the spirit of martyrs. But abolish *Punch* by Act of Parliament, disinherit John Bull of his *Joe Miller*, of the stock of wit and humour that has been handed down to him from generation to generation, with Magna Charta and the writ of Habeas Corpus, and all England would be in arms to-morrow. The thought of tyranny of this refined and inhuman description is too terrible to contemplate. Even the millennium without Voltaire and Rabelais, Tom Jones and Don Juan, would be to most of us what the hunting grounds across the Styx would be to a Blackfoot Indian without his horse and his dogs, or Paradise without its hours to a Turk. Perhaps we might contrive to exist as turtles do after Mr. Lewes has scooped their brains out for microscopical analysis. But what an existence! "Ah, mon pauvre maitre," exclaimed Guizot's cook, when he heard that his master was dining at the Athenæum, "je ne le rever-

rai, plus." And we may say pretty much the same of John Bull: he might still dine, perhaps, still talk politics, still chat about Exchequer Bills and Tariffs, the Bank Rate, and the Three per Cents; but without his wits and humourists, the charms of life would be gone.

And of these there is none whom we could spare less than Sydney Smith. He is among wits what Horace is among poets. He is a genial, well-bred, well-read man of the world, with the thoughts and tastes, the habits and foibles of a man of the world. His wit, like Voltaire's, is the wit of everybody; and it is wit that you can quote upon every topic of talk that starts up in the House of Commons, in the newspapers, at an archidiaconal luncheon, on the croquet lawn, or in a club smoking-room. Possessing powers equal to those of Swift and Sheridan, of Curran and Jerrold, Sydney Smith was free from everything like coarseness and cynicism, from everything like buffoonery and bitterness. His wit is always pure, always human. There is no affectation, no vice, in his tone or in his temper. He lays no little traps to surprise, never talks up to a subject to fire off the *bon mots* he has been manufacturing at his desk in the morning. He simply puts into terse and sparkling sentences happy thoughts that we all think we could have thrown out ourselves had we formed one of the party; and his conversation and his writings are thus, when analysed, simply the conversation and writing of a man of keen and decisive intelligence — of a man who knows no more of the question than you or I, but who has the knack of looking at it in perspective, of taking in all that can be said upon it at a glance, of seizing the most striking points of the argument, turning the weak ones inside out, making the strong ones his own, and of throwing out his own thoughts and criticism as the inspiration of the moment, in the dashing, off-hand style of a man of high spirits and of brilliant intellect. He was not a thinker: his pulse ran too high for original thought. He rarely troubled himself to think a subject out in logical form, to think it out, that is, as a barrister thinks out his brief. He seized upon its strongest points by a sort of instinct, upon the striking and picturesque points that attract dull and clever people alike, and these by the mere force of wit and imagination he made his own. His arguments upon Parliamentary Reform, Catholic Emancipation, and the Ballot, are all arguments that he might have picked up at Sam Rogers's breakfast-table or in Lady Holland's drawing-room. They are all the arguments of

the ideal "international man" whom we picture to ourselves when we wish to look at a question without prejudice and without cant. Yet these were the arguments that carried the Reform Bill, that carried the Catholic Relief Bill, that swept away the Test and Corporation Acts; and after they had once been put in their most vivid forms by the wit of Sydney Smith, every one adopted them as his own. Sydney Smith's views after that seemed to be the only views that a man of sense and wit could hold. They were the views at once of the statesman and of the diner-out who thought it his business to look at every political question from what Thackeray called the "don't-care-a-damn" point of view. Look at his pamphlet on the Ballot. "It was all flash and sparkle," say Mr. Grote and Sir John Bowring. All its arguments had been put and refuted, perhaps, in a way dozens of times in the House of Commons. But as these arguments are put by Sydney Smith, it is simply impossible to refute them. In his hands you can do no more with them than you can do with Hume's perplexing syllogism about miracles. "If a man is sheltered from intimidation, is it at all clear that he would vote from any better motive than intimidation? The landlord has perhaps said a cross word to the tenant; the candidate for whom the tenant votes in opposition to his landlord has taken his second son for a footman, or his father knew the candidate's grandfather: how many thousand votes, sheltered (as the ballotists suppose) from intimidation, would be given from such silly motives as these? how many would be given from the mere discontent of inferiority? or from that strange, simious, schoolboy passion of giving pain to others, even when the author cannot be found out? — motives as pernicious as any which could proceed from intimidation. . . . The real object is to vote for the good politicians, not for the kind-hearted or agreeable man: the mischief is just the same to the country whether I am smiled into a corrupt choice, or frowned into a corrupt choice. What is it to me whether my landlord is the best of landlords or the most agreeable of men? I must vote for Joseph Hume, if I think Joseph more honest than the Marquis. The more mitigated Radical may pass over this, but the real carnivorous variety of the animal should declaim as loudly against the fascinations as against the threats of the great. The man who possesses the land should never speak to the man who tills it. The intercourse between landlord and tenant should be as strictly guarded as that of

the sexes in Turkey. A funded duenna should be placed over every landed grandee. "I am a professed Radical," said the tenant of a great duke to a friend of mine, "and the duke knows it; but if I vote for his candidates, he lets me talk as I please, live with whom I please, and does not care if I dine at a Radical dinner every day in the week. If there was a ballot, nothing could persuade the duke, or the duke's master, the steward, that I was not deceiving them, and I should lose my farm in a week." This is the real history of what would take place. The single lie on the hustings would not suffice; the concealed democrat who voted against his landlord must talk with the wrong people, subscribe to the wrong club, huzza at the wrong dinner, break the wrong head, lead (if he wished to escape from the watchful jealousy of his landlord) a long life of lies between every election; and he must do this, not only *cundo*, in his calm and prudential state, but *redeundo* from the market, warmed with beer and expanded by alcohol; and he must not only carry on his seven years of dissimulation before the world, but in the very bosom of his family, or he must expose himself to the dangerous garrulity of wife, children, and servants, from whose indiscretion every kind of evil report would be carried to the ears of the watchful steward.

. . . The noise and jollity of a ballot mob must be such as the very devils would look on with delight. A set of deceitful wretches wearing the wrong colours, abusing their friends, pelting the man for whom they voted, drinking their enemies' punch, knocking down persons with whom they entirely agreed, and roaring out eternal duration to principles they abhorred. A scene of wholesale bacchanalian fraud, a *posse comitatus* of liars which would disgust any man with a free government, and make him sigh for the monarchy of Constantinople." These sentences of Sydney Smith contain the germ-thoughts of half the arguments and of half the sarcasms that the wits of the House of Commons, of Printing House Square, and of Northumberland Street now fire off against the Ballot. You cannot answer them. You cannot improve upon them. They represent with terseness and wit the only views that the mass of people will ever think of taking of the ballot-box. He supplied the Peace Society, again, with a more telling description of the consequences of war than any of their own orators have yet been able to strike out for themselves; and in his essay on classical education he brought together, in a terse and vivid form, most of the arguments

against the present system of teaching Latin and Greek that have since been used by Mr. Lowe and Professor Huxley.

"Everyone will admit that of all the disgusting labours of life, the labour of lexicon and dictionary is the most intolerable. Nor is there a greater object of compassion than a fine boy, full of animal spirits, set down on a bright sunny day, with a heap of unknown words before him, to be turned into English before supper, by the help of a ponderous dictionary alone. The object in looking into a dictionary can only be to exchange an unknown sound for one that is known. Now, it seems indisputable that the sooner this exchange is made the better. The greater the number of such exchanges which can be made in a given time, the greater is the progress, the more abundant the *copia verborum* obtained by the scholar. Would it not be of advantage if the dictionary at once opened at the required page, and if a self-moving index at once pointed to the requisite word? Is any advantage gained to the world by the time employed first in finding the letter P, and then in finding the three guiding letters P R I? This appears to us to be pure loss of time, justifiable only if it is inevitable; and even after this is done, what an infinite multitude of difficulties are heaped at once upon the wretched beginner! Instead of his being reserved for his greater skill and maturity in the language, he must employ himself in discovering in which of many senses which his dictionary presents the word is to be used; in considering the case of the substantive, and the syntactical arrangement in which it is to be placed, and the relation it bears to other words. The loss of time in the merely mechanical part of the old plan is immense. We doubt very much if an average boy, between ten and fourteen, will look out or find more than sixty words in an hour; we say nothing at present of the time employed in thinking of the meaning of each word when he has found it, but of the mere naked discovery of the word in the lexicon or dictionary. It must be remembered, we say an *average* boy—not what Master Evans, the show boy, can do, nor what Master Macarthy, the boy who is whipped every day, can do, but some boy between Macarthy and Evans; and not what the medium can do while his mastigophorous superior is frowning over him, but what he actually does when left in the midst of noisy boys, and with a recollection that, by sending to the neighbouring shop, he can obtain any quantity of unripe gooseberries upon credit. Now, if this statement be true, and if there are 10,000 words in the Gospel of St. John,

here are 160 hours employed in the mere digital process of turning over leaves! But, in much less time than this, any boy of average quickness might learn, by the Hamiltonian method, to construe the whole four Gospels with the greatest accuracy and the most scrupulous correctness. The interlineal translation of course spares the trouble and time of this mechanical labour The Hamilton method begins with what all persons want, a facility of construing, and leaves every scholar to become afterwards as profound in grammar as he (or those who educate him) may choose; whereas the old method aims at making all more profound grammarians than three-fourths wish to be, or than nineteen-twentieths *can* be. One of the enormous follies of the enormously foolish education in England is, that all young men—dukes, fox-hunters, and merchants—are educated as if they were to keep a school and serve a curacy; while scarcely an hour in the Hamiltonian education is lost for any variety of life. A grocer may learn enough of Latin to taste the sweets of Vigil; a cavalry officer may read and understand Homer, without knowing the *ἵμν* comes from *ω* with a smooth breathing, and that it is formed by an improper reduplication. In the meantime, there is nothing in that education which prevents a scholar from knowing (if he wishes to know) what Greek compounds draw back their accents. He may trace verbs in *ἵμν*, from polysyllables in *ω*, or derive endless glory from marking down derivatives in *πρ*, in changing the *ε* of their primitives into *ι*ota." This was his style. No artifice, no affectation, nothing like pedantry. Ordinary arguments, or at least the arguments of people of average intelligence and culture, set in brilliant and vivid forms. It was irresistible with most people: it was taking with all. You may trace the germ of all his arguments in this paper, for instance, in Locke and in Hamilton's own prefaces. But neither of them knew how to do justice to their thoughts as Sydney Smith did. He barbed their sense and logic with his wit; and everything that he thus set his mark upon he made his own. His mind was, as Mr. Disraeli said of Sir Robert Peel's, a vast appropriation clause. "When he had any subject on hand," Lady Holland says, "he was indefatigable in reading, searching, inquiring, seeking every source of information, and discussing it with any man of sense or cultivation who crossed his path."

And I have heard this illustrated by the personal recollections of those who knew him at Coombe Florey. In preparing his

articles for the *Edinburgh Review*, if any point happened to turn up incidentally that he did not comprehend, he spared no pains in hunting up books or practical authorities, and he frequently tested an argument or an illustration that he felt doubtful about by throwing it out for criticism in conversation. Most of the points of his Ballot article were put through this test. You may often trace this in the writings themselves. Their tone is the tone of his conversation and of his correspondence. He ticks and toys with a book of travels, a blue book, or a bit of French fiction, as he might have toyed with it standing by his own fireside at Foxton with his girls by his side, or in Lady Holland's boudoir. It requires but a slight effort of the imagination in taking up his volume of contributions to the *Edinburgh Review* to picture him at his desk, or standing with his back to a chair, laughing at Colonel Collins's arguments about the settlement of Botany Bay—at the argument, for instance, that we shall receive hereafter an ample equivalent, in bales of goods, for all the vices we export—speculating upon the sort of apologies that an Australian sheep farmer in the Blue Mountains might send to the Court when summoned to serve on a jury: "The waters of the Hawksbury are out, and I have a mile to swim—the kangaroo will break into my corn—the convicts have robbed me—my little boy has been bitten by an ornithorynchus paradoxus—I have sent a man fifty miles with a sack of flour to buy a pair of breeches for the assizes, and he is not returned"—tracing out analogies between the settlements of America and Australia, and throwing out prophecies of what might happen in the days, perhaps, of Edward the Tenth, when, to assert our sovereignty over an important and flourishing colony, endless blood and treasure will be exhausted to support a tax on kangaroos' skins, faithful Commons will go on voting fresh supplies to support a just and necessary war, and Newgate, then become a quarter of the world, will evince a heroism, not unworthy of the great characters by whom she was originally peopled;—or, playing with this idea from another point of view, anticipating the day when some Botany Bay Tacitus shall record the crimes of an emperor lineally descended from a London pickpocket, or paint the valour with which he has led his New Hollanders into the heart of China; or, varying his humour and setting the table in a roar over his description of the freaks of Nature at the Antipodes in making cherries with the stone on the outside, a monstrous animal as

tall as a grenadier, with the head of a rabbit, a tail as big as a bed-post, hopping along at the rate of five hops to a mile, with three or four young kangaroos looking out of its false uterus to see what is passing, a quadruped as big as a large cat, with the eyes, colour, and skin of a mole, and the bill and web-feet of a duck puzzling Dr. Shaw, and rendering the latter half of his life miserable, from his utter inability to determine whether it was a bird or a beast; and a parrot, with the legs of a sea-gull, a skate, with the head of a shark, and a bird of such monstrous dimensions that a side bone of it will dine three real carnivorous Englishmen. This was his style in reviewing. It was not criticism like Jeffrey's. It was the laughing, rollicking nonsense of a man of rare wit and imagination talking about the book with a pen in his hand exactly as he talked about it in his own easy chair at Foxton or at his table in Green Street. "Lightness and flimsiness," he used to say, "are my style in reviewing," but thousands of readers read Sydney Smith's nonsense who never thought of cutting the leaves to look at a page of Jeffrey's metaphysics or Brougham's politics. His fine Roman hand is generally distinguishable in the first sentence. His description of Dr. Parr's wig, for instance, trespassing a little on the orthodox magnitude of perukes in the anterior parts, but scorning even episcopal limits behind, and swelling out into boundless convexity of friz, and the comparison of the style of his wig with the style of his sermons — his account of the Society for the Suppression of Vice as a society for suppressing the vices of people with incomes of less than £500 a year — and his suggestion that they should prove their honesty and their courage by sending a Duchess to the Poultry Compter, or their consistency by establishing a society of barbers, butchers, and bakers, in order to put all classes on an equal footing, to return to the higher classes that moral character by which they are so highly benefited; — his comparison of the notes of the campaners in the Forest of Cayenne, distinguishable three miles off, to the belfry of a cathedral, ringing for a new dean, just appointed on account of shabby politics, small understanding, and good family; — his suggestion that Mr. Waterton's illustration of a nondescript species of monkey was the head of a master in chancery, and his criticism upon the impropriety of travellers thus trifling with science and natural history; — his description of the boa constrictor swallowing the tortoise whole, shell and all, and consuming him slowly in the

interior, as the Court of Chancery does a great estate — are all in the exact style of his talk. Here is an example of the way in which he gathered up in his recollection a host of incidents to exemplify the pleasures of life in the tropics, and threw them out in an avalanche of wit: "The *bete rouge* lays the foundation of a tremendous ulcer. In a moment you are covered with ticks. Chigoes bury themselves in your flesh, and hatch a large colony of young chigoes in a few hours. They will not live together, but every chigoe sets up a separate ulcer, and has his own private portion of pus. Flies get entry into your mouth, into your eyes, into your nose; you eat flies, drink flies, and breathe flies. Lizards, cockroaches, and snakes get into your bed; ants eat up the books; scorpions sting you on the foot. Everything bites, stings, or bruises; every second of your existence you are wounded by some piece of animal life that nobody has ever seen before, except Swammerdam and Meriam. An insect with eleven legs is swimming in your teacup; a nondescript with nine wings is struggling in the small beer; or a caterpillar with several dozen eyes in his belly, is hastening over the bread and butter! All nature is alive, and seems to be gathering all her entomological hosts to eat you up, as you are standing, out of your coat, waistcoat, and breeches. Such," he says, reflecting upon his own description, "are the tropics, and all this, of course, may well reconcile us to our dews, fogs, vapours, and drizzle — to our apothecaries rushing about with gargles and tinctures — to our old British constitutional coughs, sore throats, and swelled faces." In passages like this we have Sydney Smith before us with all his wit and imagination. It is the tone of his conversation all over. There was nothing like study or premeditation about it. His wit was always fresh. It never smelt of the lamp, like Sheridan's. "You always find the dew on it." Perhaps now and then you may detect his reproducing in his conversation a thought that he had touched in his correspondence, or working out an idea in one letter that he has only half developed in another; but even in cases of this sort it is generally sufficiently obvious that the thought is reproduced simply because it is floating about in his memory rather than from the want of fresh ideas; and it is reproduced generally with such a profusion of fresh wit and imagery that it has all the air of an original flight of fancy. Take, for instance, his whimsical note to Lady Grey, beseeching her to put my lord's pistols and powder flasks out of his reach.

"For God's sake do not drag me into another war! I am worn down, and worn out, with crusading and defending Europe, and protecting mankind; I *must* think a little of myself. I am sorry for the Spaniards—I am sorry for the Greeks—I deplore the fate of the Jews; the people of the Sandwich Islands are groaning under the most detestable tyranny; Bagdad is oppressed—I do not like the present state of the Delta—Thibet is not comfortable. Am I to fight for all these people? The world is bursting with sin and sorrow. Am I to be champion of the Decalogue, and to be eternally raising fleets and armies to make all men good and happy? We have just done saving Europe, and I am afraid the consequences will be that we shall cut each other's throats. No war, dear lady Grey!—no eloquence; but apathy, selfishness, common sense, arithmetic!" He had struck the key-note of this in a hasty note written days previously to Mrs. Meynell, and he plays with its germ-thought in two or three forms in several of his letters written almost concurrently with this. Here, however, in his note to Lady Grey, it comes out in full and perfect form; and in this form I once heard Mr. Cobden at dinner recommend it as the wittiest and most sensible motto he could find for the Manchester party.

Sydney Smith's conversation was the conversation of a man mad with spirits, of a man, to use his own expression, who must either talk, laugh, or burst, the conversation of a man whose intellect bred analogies and picturesque imagery as the sun breeds clouds. Take him when or where you might, you never took him by surprise; and most of the brightest illustrations of his wit, like Douglas Jerrold's, were those that he struck out on the spur of the moment. His reply, for instance, to the beautiful girl who complained, "Oh, Mr. Sydney, this pea will never come to perfection," "Then permit me to lead perfection to the pea," is in its style perfect. Even French wit and chivalry has never equalled that; and in the Court of Louis XIV. it would have been crowned with a Cardinal's hat. His reply to the Archbishop of York—"I hear, Mr. Smith, you do not approve of much riding for the clergy." "Why, my lord, perhaps there is not *much* objection, provided they do not ride too well, and stick out their toes professionally," was very keen; for Sydney Smith could never sit a horse, and his diocesan was one of the finest horsemen in a province where every boy is born in the saddle, and rides by instinct. There was a touch

of the courtier as well as of the wit in his reply to the lady who, arguing in a large party that it was always high tide at London bridge at twelve o'clock, appealed to him with, "Now, Mr. Smith, is it not so?" "It used not to be so, I believe, formerly, but perhaps the Lord Mayor and Aldermen have altered it lately." He traced out the analogies of things with marvellous quickness. A man at his side reckons the amount of his ground-rent at 5*l.* a foot. "Ah, the price of a London footman six foot high, thirty guineas a year." Upon a couple of talkers, "There is the same difference between their tongues as between the hour and the minute hand: one goes ten times as fast, and the other signifies ten times as much." "If you masthead a sailor for not doing his duty, why should you not weathercock a parishioner for refusing to pay tithes?" Of a poet who wrote with great labour—"How is Rogers?" "He is not very well." "Why, what is the matter?" "Oh, don't you know he has produced a couplet? When our friend is delivered of a couplet, with infinite labour and pain, he takes to his bed, has straw laid down, the knocker tied up, expects his friends to call and make enquiries, and the answer at the door invariably is, 'Mr. Rogers and his little couplet are as well as can be expected.' When he produces an Alexandrine he keeps his bed a day longer." Of a New Zealand attorney—"There is a New Zealand attorney, just arrived in London, with 6*s.* 8*d.* tattooed all over his face;" and of illusions—"We naturally lose illusions as we get older, like teeth, but there is no Cartwright to fit a new set into our understandings. I have, alas, only one illusion left, and that is the Archbishop of Canterbury." Combining a vivid imagination with this brilliant gift of hitting upon analogies, with these high spirits, and this remarkable fluency of expression, Sydney Smith was as a talker irresistible; and, except Macaulay, he generally talked every guest at a table into silence. His habit was, as he said, to fire right across the table, and to talk upon any subject that happened to be started, rarely starting anything of his own. Byron calls him, in *Don Juan*,

"The loudest wit I e'er was deafened with;"

and that is the general testimony. He and Macaulay together set the table in confusion, appalled quiet people, made them eat the wrong dishes, and drink the wrong wines. It was impossible for either of them to hear the other speak. It was, however, when talking against Macaulay,

at Holland House or at Rogers's, that he talked his best; but, unlike most wits, he owed none of his excitement to wine. Wine generally depressed his spirits, as it did Byron's; and when he had drank nothing but a glass of barley water, he was in his highest spirits. These were his happiest hours of inspiration; and the slightest hint set him off striking out analogies, playing with them in his imagination, and adorning them with the flowers of his fancy. And you could generally trace his wit, as it were, in the process of manufacture. That was one of the charms of his conversation. His intellect was like an electric coil; you touched it, and it flashed out in sparkling coruscations at the touch. The conversation at one of Rogers's breakfasts turns upon American birds. "My dear Rogers," says Smith, "if we were both in America, we should be tarred and feathered; and, lovely as we are by nature, I should be an ostrich and you an emu." Sir Charles Lyell's book is brought on the carpet, and people wonder what sort of a spectacle our era will present to the Sir Charles Lyell of the next geological epoch. "Yes, imagine an excavation on the site of St Paul's; fancy a lecture, by the Owen of some future age, on the thigh-bone of a Minor Canon, or the tooth of a Dean—the form, qualities, the knowledge, tastes, propensities, he would discover from them." It was in this spirit that, picturing the embarrassments of the London University, he drew his sketch of the bailiffs seizing on the air-pump, the exhausted receiver, and galvanic batteries, and chasing the Professor of Modern History round the quadrangle. His list of tortures—dooming Mrs. Marcet, for example, to listen for a thousand years to conversations between Caroline and Emily, where Caroline should always give wrong explanations in chemistry, and Emily, in the end, be unable to distinguish an acid from an alkali; and Macaulay to have false dates and facts of the reign of Queen Anne for ever shouted in his ears, all liberal and honest opinions ridiculed in his presence, and not able to say a single word in their defence, was thrown off in a conversation at Romilly's on the tortures that Dante had invented. And so, too, was his description of the Utilitarians. "That man is so hard," says Smith, criticising a quotation from Mr. James Mill, or one of the Westminster Reviewers, "that you might drive a broad-wheeled waggon over him, and it would produce no impression; if you were to bore holes in him with a gimlet, I am convinced sawdust would come out of him. He and his school treat

mankind as if they were mere machines; the feelings or affections never enter into their calculations. If everything is to be sacrificed to utility, why do you bury your grandmother at all? why don't you cut her into small pieces at once, and make potable soup of her?"

Yet, Sydney Smith's wit, after all, was but the flavour of his mind. Of course, people who knew nothing of him but as a diner-out of the first water, and took their estimate of his character from the witty nonsense they heard him pouring forth when talking, over a glass of wine, *à tort et à travers*, quoting the anathema of the Clerk of the General Assembly upon the Solemn League and Covenant for spoiling the longs and shorts in Scotland, and relating how at College he had broken a chess-board over the head of the Archbishop of Canterbury, suggesting that a Tory Dean ought to be preached to death by wild curates, praying that Spring Rice would go into holy orders, talking of the secret wish of his heart to roast a Quaker, arguing that the Jews should be kept for the private tyranny and intolerance of the bishops—"Thirty thousand Jews, it is but a small matter! do not be too hard upon the Church;" recommending the Bishop of New Zealand to serve up roast missionary, with cold curate on the sideboard, for the entertainment of the Maori chiefs, rallying the bishops for living vindictively, and evincing their aversion to a Whig Ministry by improved health, hoaxing innocent dowagers by telling them that a cherub had been caught in the Blue Mountains, or that his dog was in the habit of eating a parish boy every morning for breakfast, and recommending them, when the thermometer was in the nineties, to take off their skin and sit in their bones, as he did; throwing out wild conjectures upon the possibility of the existence of a world where men and women are all made of stone, or perhaps of Parian marble, and shouting out to Sir Roderick Murchison to ask how he would like to pass eternity with a grey wacke woman; talking about confounding the number of the Muses with the Thirty-nine Articles when he took an extra glass of wine, and setting himself right by repeating the lines, and finding "Descend ye Thirty-nine" two feet too long—thought him a very clever and witty man, but, perhaps, a joker of jokes, and nothing more. These people knew nothing of the depth and richness of his mind. The flash and sparkle of his thought were so dazzling that none but those who knew him well—knew him, that is, in his quiet and soberer moods—gave

him credit for the power of thought, the sense, and prudence that formed the fibre of his intellect. Yet few men possessed higher powers of thought, of eloquence, of earnestness, of courage, than Sydney Smith. Possessing as much wit as a man without a grain of his sense, he had as much sense as a man without a spark of his wit. But he had one fault. He did not understand the art of cant; he never thought of his cloth. His serious conversation with two or three friends on the lawn at Coombe Florey was like the serious conversation of Charles Lamb, superior to that of his lighter and gayer hours. But, like Macaulay's flashes of silence, these lapses of Sydney Smith into the proprieties of conversation, into thought and philosophy, and iced common sense, were reserved for his own fireside, and for the friends of his fireside. Take up his sermons, or run your eye through the reflections and precepts which he notes in his diary, and you see at once what a vein of deep religious thought ran through his nature, what pure and noble conceptions he formed of life, and of his own work as a Christian minister; but even here you may trace the hand of the wit in his criticism upon the false sentiments of religion and philosophy. He ranked a comfortable house as a source of happiness next to health and a pure conscience. "To be unhappy is the luxury of a false religion." "No reflecting man can ever wish to adulterate manly piety (the parent of all that is good in the world) with mummery and parade. But we are strange, very strange creatures, and it is better, perhaps, not to place too much confidence in our reason alone. If anything, there is, perhaps, too little pomp and ceremony in our worship, instead of too much. We quarrelled with the Roman Catholic Church in a great hurry and a great passion, and furious with spleen; clothed ourselves with sackcloth because she was habited in brocade; rushing, like children, from one extreme to another, and blind to all medium between complication and barrenness, formality and neglect." "Moralists tell you of the evils of wealth and station, and the happiness of poverty. I have been very poor the greatest part of my life, and have borne it as well I believe as most people; but I can safely say that I have been happier every guinea I have gained." "How exquisitely absurd to tell girls that beauty is of no value, dress of no use! Beauty is of value; her whole prospects and happiness in life may often depend upon a new gown or a becoming bonnet, and if she has five grains of common sense she will find this out. The great

thing is to teach her their just value, and that there must be something better under the bonnet than a pretty face for real happiness. But never sacrifice truth."

Upon matters of business, too, upon anything affecting the administration of his parish, or his duties as a Canon of Bristol or St. Paul's, or as a country gentleman and a magistrate, Sydney Smith was as prompt, as energetic, and as business-like as a man who never made a joke in his life. Looking upon the country as a kind of healthy grave, believing that most of the happiness of life was to be found in association with the bad weather, coal fires, and good society of a crowded city, and that the main use of the country was to give one a keener relish for London life, Sydney Smith settled down upon a Yorkshire Vicarage in the spirit of a man who had talked of turnips and dogs, and drank ale with his grooms all his life, and in a couple of years this "powerful son of Heaven," this prince of dinner-table wits, the rival of Talleyrand, of Canning, and of Frere, was the life and soul of a village, where, as he said, people only dined out once in seven years, and where, except then, nothing was visible but crows. He built his own house without the assistance of an architect, farmed his own glebe with the aid of a speaking trumpet and a telescope in the style of an Illinois squatter, bred horses like the rest of his parishioners, and sat down at his desk at the close of his day's work to throw off articles for the *Edinburgh Review*, and to scribble witty nonsense for Lady Holland and Lady Grey on the books and politics and scandal of the hour, without ever uttering a syllable of peevish complaint about being thrown away, being desolate, or such like trash. At Bristol and at St. Paul's Sydney Smith distinguished himself as the most business-like man in the Chapter; and in dealing with practical questions in the *Edinburgh Review*, with questions like those of Church Government, Penal Settlements, Prison Discipline, and the Game Laws, he dealt with them in the keen hard-headed style of a model Chairman of Quarter Sessions. His papers on Botany Bay and the Game Laws, and his speeches on Catholic Emancipation and Parliamentary Reform might all have been addressed to crowded benches in the House of Commons at two o'clock in the morning. They glitter with wit, like almost everything that he wrote; but their wit is, after all, but the foil of his arguments, and his arguments are those of a statesman, arguments that even the Tory squires would turn over in their minds as they lit their cigars to walk home. Contrast any of these articles of Syd-

ney Smith with the speeches of Sheridan, and you see at once what a mass of tough argument and of hard thought underlies Sydney Smith's wit when he thought it necessary to be anything more than witty. Sheridan, in comparison, is mere tinsel. Possessing powers of railleury equal, at least, to those of Sheridan, Sydney Smith, nevertheless, unlike Sheridan, never thought of depending on these alone in discussing a question of politics or social morality. His forte was logic, and he marshalled his arguments with the tact of a Parliamentary general. He puts his own arguments in the terse and decisive form of the most accomplished master of fence, and he scalps the fallacies of an opponent in the neat and off-hand style of that Red Indian of Parliamentary debate, Mr. Lowe. You see at a glance that he is full of his subject, master of all its arguments, and knows all the points of his opponent. He never haggles over a weak argument. He goes to the heart of the question at once, seizes all its strongest points, and works these up in their most powerful and vivid forms. There is an air of touch and go in his style; he deals with everything with an apparently light hand; but analyze his views and his arguments, and in nine cases out of ten you find them characterized by the keen intelligence, good sense, and breadth of a man of the world looking at the matter in the dry light of a political epicurean. And yet, with all this, Sydney Smith always contrives to close his discussion of a serious question in the tone of a man quite in earnest — in the tone of a man, that is, whose convictions are thoroughly ingrained — of a man who, if called upon, can express those convictions with a strength of language corresponding with their depth and intensity in his own mind; but who, relying at present upon their own inherent plausibility, tempers his expressions by the rules of chivalry and good breeding.

Of art and polish, as art and polish were understood by Macaulay, you find no traces in Sydney Smith. His daughter calls him a sort of rough rider of subjects; and the phrase is an apt one. He never troubled himself with the metaphysics of a question; he never troubled himself with its trivialities. Taking up only those topics of talk that were of the directest personal interest, those topics that were under discussion in the House of Commons, in Cathedral Chapters, and at every dinner table, Sydney Smith selected their most telling points, and then sat down to work these up with his own vigorous understanding, from what I may call the common sense

point of view. And his style is in its way perfect. It is the exact mirror of his thought. He wrote as he talked, wrote, that is, with the dash of a man of keen wit and of high intelligence, rarely revised his manuscript, and left most of his contributions to the *Edinburgh Review* to chance and Jeffrey. Take up any of these articles and you have Sydney Smith before you at once, and generally in his best form, in all his brilliance, benevolence, and flashing decision; and by the light of Lady Holland's hints as to her father's habits of work, one can, by a very slight effort of imagination, picture him at his fireside galloping through the pages of a thick quarto in the course of a morning, or sitting down at his desk in the evening looking through his papers and his bills with the plodding industry of an attorney's clerk, and then, by way of variation in his employment, taking up his pen to throw off a few pages of "trifling nonsense" for Jeffrey. He wrote with great rapidity. "No hesitation, no erasures, no stopping to consider and round his periods, no writing for effect, but a pouring out of the fulness of his mind and feelings, for he was heart and soul whatever he undertook. He hardly ever altered or corrected; indeed, he was so impatient of this, that he could hardly bear the trouble of even looking over what he had written; but would not unfrequently throw the manuscript down on the table as soon as finished, and say, starting up and addressing his wife, 'There, it is done, now, Kate, do look it over, and put in dots to the i's and strokes to the t's.'" And his manuscript needed this revision; for, with the exception of Jeffrey's, it was probably the worst that Constable's printers had to puzzle out for the *Edinburgh Review*. He compared it himself to the hieroglyphics of a swarm of ants escaping from an ink bottle and walking over a sheet of paper without wiping their legs; and when his wife enclosed him an illegible passage from one of his letters from London, containing directions about the management of his farm, and asked for an interpretation, he simply returned it with the explanation that he "must decline ever reading his own handwriting four-and-twenty hours after he had written it." Yet writing, as he generally did, upon the impulse of the moment, no man ever wrote more consistently, more honestly, or more courageously. "Catch me, if you can," he said, with a touch of pride, when collecting his contributions to the *Edinburgh Review* for republication, "in any one illiberal sentiment, or in any opinion which I have need to recant; and that after twenty years' scribbling upon

all subjects." And Sydney Smith had reason to think and speak with pride of his writings from this point of view, for, animated as they are by high purpose, and illustrating as they do, in the most vivid and brilliant form, his passionate love of

justice and common sense, they combine in a rare degree, in their style, English sense and French wit, and form, with the writings of Jeffrey and Macaulay, the most characteristic of the contributions to the *Edinburgh Review*.

NATURE gives a detailed description of an atmospheric telegraph invented by Signor Guattari, which professes to effect by means of compressed air all that is performed by an electric battery. By an ingenious system of tubes and stopcocks the inventor creates currents, or pulsations of air, which set in motion a lever connected with the writing apparatus. Any number of conducting tubes may be employed, and the machinery is so simple that it cannot get out of order. Of course it has an advantage over the electric system in being wholly unaffected by atmospheric influences, and in the requisite medium being always at hand. The Royal Scientific Institute of Naples has awarded to Signor Guattari a gold medal, in recognition of what they consider an important invention, adding a graceful tribute on its presentation to the effect that it was the only gold medal which the institute had ever awarded. As experiments with the machine were successfully conducted only a few weeks ago, the system cannot be pronounced chimerical; and we hope the attention of our Post Office authorities will be directed to it.

A CERTAIN great writer about a century and a half ago set forth with much precision the causes which justify war. Some of them will be found to be so applicable at the present moment that we may venture to quote his remarks:—

Sometimes (says the great traveller, Captain Gulliver) the quarrel between two princes is to decide which of them shall dispossess a third of his dominions, where neither of them pretends to any right. On the same principle occasionally, to do them justice, they try to make treaties instead of quarrelling. Sometimes (he proceeds) one prince quarrels with another for fear the other should quarrel with him. Sometimes a war is entered upon because the enemy is too strong, and sometimes because he is too weak. Sometimes our neighbours want the things which we have, or have the things which we want; and we both fight till they take ours or give us theirs. It is a very justifiable cause of war to invade a country after the people have been wasted by famine, destroyed by pestilence, or embroiled by factions among themselves (and still more, we will venture to add, if they are in danger of becoming too closely united). It is justifiable to enter into a war against our nearest ally when one of his towns lies convenient for us or a territory of land that would render our dominions round and compact [a rude and old-fashioned expression for the more graceful term of a rectification of the frontiers]. If

a prince (the term may include a president) sends forces into a nation where the people are poor and ignorant, he may lawfully put the half of them to death and make slaves of the rest [putting them all to death is simpler and saves trouble] in order to civilize and seduce them from their barbarous way of living. It is a very kindly, honourable, and frequent practice when one prince desires the assistance of another to secure him against an invasion, that the assistant, when he has driven out the invader, should seize on the dominions himself [it looks better to annex part of them], and kill, imprison, or banish the prince he came to relieve.

Only in modern times princes are not killed, but provided with a comfortable retiring pension. With the exceptions we have noticed, there is still some sense in these pithy remarks. A few words should have been added on the duty of neutrals. The great principle is to stand still so long as you are not hurt yourself, see your neighbours swallowed up without disturbing the process by useless complaints, and make the best market you can from the wants of the belligerents. A few corollaries may perhaps be added when the present war has added a little to our experience. *Pall Mall Gazette*.

"OHE! LAMBERT!"—Many versions have been published of the origin of this saying in France. The following may be relied upon as the correct one. I was an eye-witness of the circumstance: "In 1848, after the declaration of the Republic in France, it became the fashion for the National Guards of the larger towns to invite detachments of those of Paris to visit and 'fraternize' with them, for the purpose of fellowship and union against the common enemies, the socialists and the reactionary parties (Imperialist and Royal). The National Guards of Paris were thus invited by those of Havre. At the close of the fete a train awaited the Parisians at the Havre station, wherein most were seated, the departure being delayed to fill the carriages. Just at this period a Parisian National Guard, who had been separated from his friend, ran along the carriages shouting into each as he passed it—"Ohe! Lambert! Es-tu-là?" The persistence of his endeavours raised a general laugh, and for some time the cry became popular in the streets, and then 'died out,' to be revived a year or two ago after being forgotten for many years."

Notes and Queries.

From The Pall Mall Gazette.

A FRENCH MANIFESTO OF 1552.

THE proclamation to the German nation which the Emperor issued before he left for the war, and wherein he promised to save it as he had saved France, and to bring it liberty from its oppressors generally and chiefly from the rapacious Prussian King, is not without its curious pendant. It was in 1552 that that most Christian French King, Henry II., issued a very similar document to the German nation by way of introduction to the robbery of the three episcopates of Metz, Toul, and Verdun. His peacefulness, he says, had been interpreted by his enemies as fear. Meanwhile, many heavy complaints by a number of electors, princes, and other excellent people of the German nation had come before him, of their being oppressed by the Emperor with unbearable tyranny and servitude, so much so that nothing more certain could follow therefrom than that, with everlasting loss of the national freedom of Germany and the perishing of many people, a monarchy would be built up unto the Emperor and the House of Austria. To hear this had been very grievous to the King, not merely because he was of the same origin as the Germans, inasmuch as his own ancestors had also been Germans, but also on account of the treaties and ancient friendship which through similarity of customs had always been held steadily between the two nations before those present evil practices of the Emperor, and this had served for the common weal as well as for the real safety of the crown of France. A change from German liberty to everlasting servitude, and the consequent misery of the German nation and the Holy Empire, could not, therefore, come to pass without injuring France, since the German nation was a strong citadel not only for all France but all Christendom. The King had for this reason always hoped that those two strongest nations of Christendom would some day combine their arms, so that they should have absolutely nothing more to fear from the unbelievers (Turks) or any other enemy. Since, however, hitherto no such unanimity of princes had existed from which a union of the German nation could have been hoped for, and now one, now the other had asked for his assistance, the King had not known how to tender his hand to the thus disunited empire. Now the almighty, everlasting God, however, who alone was a just master, had thus ordained it, that the Duke Octavio of Parma and Piacenza

had been unjustly attacked by the Emperor and the Pope, and that he had asked for the King's protection for himself and the Count Mirandola. In consequence whereof the King had received tidings of the desire of so many great princes and estates of the Holy Empire for a Christian understanding with them towards the saving of German liberty. The Emperor, and his brother, the Roman King, had, instead of augmenting the Empire, diminished it, inasmuch as they had swallowed wholesale (*ganz und gar gefressen*) great foundations, principalities, cities, and communes. Why does the Emperor prohibit the Germans to serve anybody but him, or to take into council, against their ancient freedom, any other potentate? How many honest, sincere, and brave men had the Emperor miserably betrayed through his bloodhounds, specially trained for that purpose, and had brought them to disgraceful death with horrible tortures? From these motives the King had not been able to refuse his aid to the German Princes and estates, but had, after divine impulse and inspiration, created with them an alliance. And because for such great benefit he hoped to obtain everlasting gratitude, obligation, and memory, he therewith would make it known to all and everybody, and swear it by Almighty God, that he did not seek or hope to obtain in reward for this faithful and difficult enterprise, the great expenses and danger and cares arising therefrom, for his own person any other gain or satisfaction but that of furthering from his own free, Royal mind the liberty of the German nation and the Holy Empire, of freeing the princes of their lamentable servitude, and of thus securing for himself an immortal name. No man should fear any violence, since he had only undertaken the war in order to restore each his lost rights, honours, goods, and liberties.

Several German princes allowed themselves to be deluded by this proclamation, and the consequence was the loss of those portions of German territory which the King of France had long coveted. Whatever may have been the intent of Napoleon's recent declaration, there are very significant signs visible already that Germany has an eye upon some of those German provinces which have at different periods been annexed to France, but which still retain their genuine German "mundart," together with their homely old manners and customs.

From The Pall Mall Gazette.
HISTORIC PARALLELS.

"THE reign of Louis XIV.," says Mr. Hettner, in his able work on the literature of the eighteenth century, "which began so gloriously, ended in a manner that could not have been foreseen. The last year of his rule shook to its lowest foundation the edifice of his monarchy. This result has been attributed to accidental causes, to the fact that the King's ailments incapacitated him from attending to business as he had formerly done, and led him to place himself in the power of an able and spirited but bigoted saint *Mme. de Maintenon*. But why should one poor mortal presume to play the part of Divine Providence for a great kingdom, and indeed for the whole civilized world? The true reason lies far deeper. The tragedy of Louis XIV. is the tragedy of absolutism. The same principle which had given Louis greatness and might caused them gradually to wane; that which, in the King's opinion was meant to strengthen and extend the unity and power of the State and the monarchy, only weakened and overthrew them."

The King had to resist the unruly tendencies of his people; although himself no general, he sought to waste in foreign wars those elements of discord and danger which might have troubled the commonwealth at home. He appears to have been the first to understand the truth of the well-known saying that France can only be governed by fear and wonder—fear of the might of her master, and wonder at such warlike exploits as dazzle and surprise the nation. "The noblest and dearest occupation of kings," wrote Louis, "is to extend the boundaries of their realms." He had, indeed, not as yet perfected what may be called the jargon of annexation, nor, indeed, discovered some of the more recently invented means of compassing the enlargement of a kingdom. The doctrine of geographical frontiers was in existence, but wanted a name. What has been wittily termed the vested interest of France in her neighbours' weaknesses, was a recognized entity, but had as yet only arrived at an imperfect stage of its development. The doctrine of nationalities was as yet unborn; it must, however, frankly be admitted that, with the defective theories and principles at his disposal, he did all that in him lay in pursuit of the "noblest and dearest occupation of kings." We may blame Louis for his ambitious schemes, but we should always recollect that he was as great in misfortune as he was in prosperity—that, although stricken in years and enfeebled by

sickness, he was fully determined to die at the head of his generals rather than allow the allies to capture Paris.

The enthusiasm kindled throughout Germany by late events has struck many Englishmen, as a thing unaccountable in its suddenness and vehemence. That Germans of all kinds and classes, from every quarter of the globe, should flock from workshop, home, or pastime, to swell the host that is now invading France may well seem strange. But we shall more easily understand the phenomenon when we look back to the events of the early part of the century. It will then appear that hatred of France and of the name of Napoleon, of the Erbfeind, or hereditary enemy, is, as it were an heirloom, handed down to the present generation by their grandfathers, and that the recurrence of events akin to those of 1813 could hardly fail to arouse the same feelings which were rife during the war of liberation. In illustration of the above we subjoin a copy of an appeal addressed in March 1814, "to the men and youths of Rhineland by Justus Grüner, Governor-General at Treves, exhorting them to enrol themselves as volunteers and fight for their common country." This document was issued just before the invasion of France by the allies.

God has judged! The Lord has saved us! The reign of impiety is at an end. It aimed at the destruction of our German Fatherland. Our fairest lands were torn from us—the ancient ecclesiastical principalities, the seat of pious and worthy princes of the Church and empire; the blooming regions of the Rhine, the Moselle, and the Saar; Germany's free and lovely mountains, and with them their indwellers, a people faithful, honest, industrious, and lovable. Yes, countrymen, for twenty years you have been severed from us, brothers from brothers, children from their common parent; long, dreadful years, during which you underwent the yoke of slavery. You were forbidden to use your own language, your commerce was impaired, your industry paralyzed, your sons were slain in foreign lands for foreign ends, your daughters dishonoured. Shall a foreign tongue, a foreign thralldom, again coerce or humble you, dishonour your families, and desecrate your altars? Never! Men of Rhineland, arise! hasten to flock around the German banner, to fight a holy fight for your country! Gather together, ye men of the Rhine, the Moselle, and the Saar! Liberated Germans! the welfare of Germany is at stake! Nobles and landowners! fight for your dignity, wealth, and possessions. Citizens! fight to preserve the ancient rights of your citizenship. Peasants! your fields and villages, the fruits of your toil, the welfare of your sons, are being fought for. Men of every degree! your trade and crafts, arts

and sciences, rights and customs will again be called into being, the very life of the nation will be renewed. Parents! Thank God that you have lived to see this glorious day. Bless your children who can take part in the task! As Abraham was ready to sacrifice his only son, so be ye ready to send forth yours to the holy war, that they may fight for the cause, for your honour, for your children and children's children.

Priests of the Eternal! ministers of the Gospel! teach the people the word of God and their own duty. Call upon them in the name of the Almighty — seize the holy cross and go forward in His name. Where the banner of faith waves, there victory is certain, honour inseparable, fame eternal, and death — immortal life!

It may be remembered that shortly before this somewhat highly flavoured appeal was issued, Napoleon had said: "Quant aux Allemands, ils sont assez nombreux, mais ils ne valent pas grande chose. Ils ont de l'enthousiasme, mais cela ne tient pas devant la poudre à canon. On a soulevé les nations contre moi, mais je leur apprendrai leur vrai intérêt."

From The Spectator.

ART AND MORALITY.*

IN a former article we pointed out some of the eccentricities of criticism into which Mr. Ruskin has been betrayed by his contempt for that precision of thought which moves with leaden foot. We shall now look at the ethical claims which Mr. Ruskin makes for Art. The task is made the more easy by the lucidity and brevity of his own statement:—

"All right human song is the finished expression, by art, of the joy or grief of noble persons, for right causes. And accurately, in proportion to the rightness of the cause, and purity of the emotion, is the possibility of the fine art. A maiden may sing of her lost love, but a miser cannot sing of his lost money. And with absolute precision, from highest to lowest, the fineness of the possible art is an index of the moral purity and majesty of the emotion it expresses. You may test it practically at any instant. Question with yourselves respecting any feeling that has taken strong possession of your mind. "Could this be sung by a master, and sung nobly, with a true melody and art?" Then it is a right feeling. Could it not be sung at all, or only sung ludicrously? It is a base one. And that is so in all the arts; so that with mathematical precision, subject to no error or exception, the art of a nation, so far as it exists, is an exponent of its ethical state."

* Lectures on Art, delivered before the University of Oxford in Hilary Term, 1870. By John Ruskin, M.A. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1870.

Last week, when unfolding De Maistre's doctrine of Papal Infallibility, we showed how the fallacy of his own reasoning was vividly revealed by the very brightness of his own rhetoric; and Mr. Ruskin, whose mastery over language is more potent even than that of De Maistre, does the like good service to the flaws of his reasoning by the flood of verbal light which flows from his pen. The passage which we have quoted is as vicious in point of logic as it is admirable in point of lucidity. It is a congeries of fallacies. But, being the fallacies of genius, they throw more light on the ethical side of art than the sound reasoning of less gifted men. Negatively, the passage is so full of instruction and of high guidance that it tells, with a clearer note than a volume of dull commentary, what art does for morality, what morality does for art, and what index the art of a people gives to the compass and the quality of its moral tone.

In a certain sense, Art is unquestionably the utterance by sound, by form, or by word, of more or less noble emotions; and, other things being equal, the nobility of the art might be exactly measured by the nobility of the emotions to which it gives voice. Thus the art of Greece would have worn an additional nobleness of mien, if, while the morality of Athena had been more exalted, the artistic conditions which nourished the genius of Phidias and Praxiteles had been left untouched. But it would be equally true and equally meaningless to say, that Mr. Gladstone would have done a greater work of statesmanship for England, if, to all his power of brain and his love of work, nature had added the capacity of toiling for twenty-three hours a day, and certainty of living to the age of a hundred and twenty. Nature does not mould such prodigies in these unpatriarchal and unheroic days. Nature is so grudging, that she forces the man who would be a great administrator to cast aside the hope of being also a great athlete. And, just as Gladstone would unfit himself for the task of conducting a Land Bill through Committee of the whole House by attempting to rival a Captain Barclay, of Ury, in the feat of walking a thousand miles in a thousand successive hours, so the art of Greece would have withered, or never have burst into flower, if the Greeks had sought to rival the austere morality of the Hebrews. In some degree, the art of Athens was noble because her morality was low. Athenian life was a sunny, unanxious, careless, Pagan life; unguided by any high code of duties, unweakened by the dread of a future which should demand the discipline of self-denial; without

a thought, or even a comprehension, of that purity to which the Hebrew legislatures pointed with unfailing finger, and which formed the central mandate in the ethics of Israel. Greek life was a life of the exchange, the academy, the circus, the bath. It was a breezy, open-air life, which guarded the body from disease and the mind from morbidity; which habituated the intelligence to delight in the subtlety of the Socratic dialects, and which hourly placed before the sculptor consummate models of human beauty. Undisturbed by the fierce promptings of religious zeal, the mind naturally turned with sunny complacency to the worship of that beauty which was written everywhere, on sky, on sea, on hill-side, and the forms of men and women. No conditions could have been better for the growth of the art which expresses itself by form. Even the positive immorality of Athenian society was of such a nature as to quicken the perception of statuesque beauty. And thus, partly because Athens was unmoral, and partly because she was immoral, she raised the greatest school of statuary that the world has ever seen, or ever can see. The last distinctive quality for which a censor would have looked in the chief home of art, is precisely that nobility of moral sentiment to which Mr. Ruskin makes art an index. If Greece had fallen under the sway of Moses, her political, her social, and moral life would have been strung up to a new intensity; unimagined vistas of duty would have been opened before her thinkers and legislators; her literature would have exchanged much of its sunny cheerfulness for some of the gloom that lies like a pall on the page of Isaiah and of Ezekiel; she would have been a land of hermits as well as of dialecticians, of fanaticism as well as of song; an unaccustomed burden of weariness and misery would have fallen on her soul, and with the new discipline of sorrow would have come a new nobility of life. But the change would have ruffled the serenity of her æsthetic nature, and, we repeat, have ruined her art. Had the Greeks been better men, their art would have been worse. Their art owes much of its perfection to the fact that their moral nature was partly stunted and partly diseased.

Mr. Ruskin may, indeed, reply that it wears the lineaments of æsthetic nobility only so far as it follows the lines of nobility in morals; that it does not draw its beauty from grossness; and that in the degree to which it is gross it is also bad. But the truth remains, that the artistic perception and artistic skill of Greece were nourished by the very lowness of her ethical code, by

her lack of high aims, by her freedom from all aspirations after moral good, by her inability even to conceive a Hebrew tone of purity, by the fact that she lived without God and died without hope. And, moreover, it is misleading to say that "accurately in proportion to the rightness of the cause, and purity of the emotion, is the possibility of the fine art." It is misleading to say that "a maiden may sing of her lost love, but a miser cannot sing of his lost money." Art is nourished less by purity of emotion than by intensity. The emotion of a maiden who sings of her lost love may not be pure or noble; it may be the very reverse; but if it be intense it is a fit subject for song. The very emotion of a miser who mourns over his lost money may, on the other hand, be brightened with flashes of purity and nobility if, as all misers more or less do, he looks beyond his mere gold to the power, position, fame, love, happiness which it can win for himself; and to the like array of good which it can win for others. Thus his emotion becomes intense, linked with many human interests, many passions, many sources of weal and woe. It becomes a subject for Art. Nay, so earthly is even the artistic nature, that its full power of song, or form, or colour is often drawn forth only by themes which are tainted by earthly grossness. Often genius can string its creations only on the thread of what is more or less sensual, and even impure. It was so with Boccaccio and Chaucer, in some measure with Titian, in great measure with Rubens, and in a melancholy degree with Byron and Heine. On a plane of morality which is essentially ignoble those men often sang or painted with a power to which we cannot deny the attribute of fine or noble. And it is not true that if they had been better men they would have been better artists. It is of no avail to reply, as Mr. Ruskin does, that "all good has its origin in good and never in evil." The marvellous beauty of Heine's prose and verse comes, of course, from what was good in the man's nature, — from his tenderness, his sympathy with suffering, his passionate love for the people, his hatred of the despotism exercised by priest or king, his righteous contempt for sacerdotal claims to exercise dominion over the souls of men. But such was the taint of impurity in Heine's nature, that he seemed driven by an irresistible impulse to make the artistic works of his hands half foul and half pure; he seemed to catch artistic fire at the impulse of guilty passion; he seemed to be shorn of half his power when living in an atmosphere of purity; and if Heine's moral

sense had been more keen, the splendour of his wit and song would have been less bright. Even Mr. Ruskin admits that the greatest painters have not been men of saintliest life. The most beautiful characters in the history of art are, not the men of grandest faculty, not the Buonarottis and the Rubenses, but the Fra Angelicos. And the work of the gentle Dominican shows how beauty of nature and height of aim may enfeeble rather than strengthen the artistic arm. Such men feel that beauty is a poor thing compared with goodness, and art a mere bagatelle in comparison with right action; and hence they strive, at whatever risk, to make their pencil teach. Fra Angelico's pictures are painted litanies. They bear the saintly token of the oratory; they seem to have been painted at the impulse of prayer, and to the accompaniment of heavenly song. And, so exquisite was the genius of the Florentine friar, that the faces of his saints will, as separate studies, win the homage of devotees and students throughout all time for their depth and purity of visual expression. Nevertheless, the artistic power of Fra Angelico's art was crippled by its didactic aim. He sacrificed the proportions of artistic beauty to the nobler ends of his Church. Not, indeed, until the spirit of religious zeal had been transmuted into the spirit of Paganism by the revival of secular learning, the uprise of physical science, and the study of the Greek antiques did the art of Italy become really great. The art of Titian and Raphael pictures Christian story with a Pagan disregard of literal truth and a Pagan worship of beauty. Just as Fra Angelico sacrificed his art to his creed, so Da Vinci and Titian sacrificed all religious or moral aims to perfection of beauty; they worked at the dictate of as Pagan a spirit as that which guided Phidias or Praxiteles; and, unfettered by moral or dogmatic shackles, they painted with such grandeur and breadth and truth as by comparison to reduce the work of Fra Angelico to an insignificance and barbarism for which we cannot account even by the inferiority of his faculty and the priority of his coming.

Mr. Ruskin's error culminates in the assertion that "the Art of a nation, so far as it exists, is an exponent of its ethical state." Had he studied morals with a fraction of the care which he has bestowed on art, he would have hazarded no such theory. The ethical state of a nation is denoted by the degree of conformity between its written or unwritten code of duties and its acts. The literature and the religion of a people may present a high standard of duty, and yet its

spiritual teachers may be vile, its political leaders corrupt, its family life impure, its daily history a vivid token of its disregard for the sacredness of property and life. Such a nation can be redeemed from the stigma of immorality by no purity in its formal teaching. On the other hand, the moral code of a people may, like that of the Hebrews, be narrow and sanguinary in comparison with that of modern days; and yet, like the Hebrews, the nation itself may present so large a measure of fulfilment, so small a breach between the mandate of the lawgiver and the obedience of the people, that in a limited sense the nation may be accounted moral. The morality of a country must be measured, in the main, by the rightness of its acts; but in the sphere of morals all that even the purest art can reveal is the power to cherish right emotions or right ideas of duty. If the songs and pictures of a nation be instinct with a spirit of purity and piety, we are justified in concluding that the nation itself sees the rectitude of pure and pious deeds; but we should hazard a signally false conclusion did we infer, that the goodness or nobility of its written or spoken sentiments offered a true index of its ethical state. Moral beauty flourishes in poetry, rhetoric, or painting long after it has vanished from life. And still more misleading were the inference, that the moral purity or elevation written on a work of art attests the moral purity or nobility of the artist himself. The power to express in word or form what is best in human nature denotes the gift of a high dramatic faculty, but not necessarily rectitude of life. Sterne and Burns, Byron and Heine, represent a crowd of men who, after revealing a rich capacity for meanness, self-indulgence, and revolting vice, can then represent with incomparable power and truth the tenderest feelings of pity for suffering, the most exalted passion of reverence and love for purity or heroism. Nor do such men thus convict themselves of hypocrisy. The richness of their artistic nature, their compass of soul, and that nobility of sentiment which can scarcely be eradicated from minds of high mental gifts, give them the keenest insight into the most tender and best feelings of humanity, and enable them to live in the seclusion of the study such a life of goodness and heroism as they depict. They are faithful friends and exemplars of austere purity, martyrs and heroes, so long as they live in a nideal atmosphere, free from the pomps and vanities of the real world, free from the whisperings of selfishness and passion. If only life had no temptations, they would be the most

perfect types of humanity that earth has ever seen. The Æolian harps of humanity, they give voice to the music of every breeze blown by purity or passion. Keats said that in his moments of keenest inspiration he felt himself to be an unconscious instrument of song, destitute of power to fashion his melody, and forced to utter the note that was breathed across its strings. And thus it happens that, laying down that pen of purity and heroism which he has been wielding with perfect sincerity, Byron can instantly plunge into revolting excesses of vice, or treat the woman whom he has sworn to love and protect with a heartlessness and brutality which give him a foremost place in the hierarchy of the despicable.

With brilliant faculty and noble sincerity of aim, Mr. Ruskin has striven to show that Art has a moral as well as an æsthetic function; and, in a certain limited sense, the claim is just. But that sense is so limited as to warrant the moralist in leaving art out of account as a special weapon for the enforcement of duty. Art is neither moral nor immoral, but unmoral. In the moralist it inspires as much fear as hope. If, on the one hand, art is the flower of civilization, and if the lack of art robs society of its highest refinement and culture, on the other hand, nothing more quickly loosens the moral fibre of a people than a surrender of its energies to the fascinations of the studio. Among men not absolutely vicious, perhaps the poorest creature presented by this poverty-stricken earth is the man who wastes his life in going from gallery to gallery on the lookout for the dainties of form and colour; who fancies that life is an affair of Raphaels and Tintorets; who is too refined not to recoil in disgust from the tumult of the market-place and the senate; who fancies that it is a mark of culture to evince a contempt for the latest triumph of physical science, for the philosophical speculation which shall determine the future shape of theological doctrine, for the details of the political measure which shall mould the destinies of millions. When Goethe excused himself for not being troubled about the invasion of Germany by the French, on the plea that he was an artist, and that the Olympian serenity of his soul would be disturbed by the rude breath of political life, he uttered a sentiment which all the magnificence of his intellect is powerless to redeem from the reproach that it is morally despicable; and that, if taken as a rule of life, it would ensure the destruction of possessions in comparison with which all the art in all the world is only so much dust and ashes. Fichte, as superior to Goethe

in nobility of soul as inferior to him in artistic gifts, acted a more grandly memorable part when, on the same occasion, he stopped his lectures on philosophy, and said to his students as he dismissed them to battle, "Gentlemen, these discourses will be resumed in a free country." Fichte knew that not art, and not even philosophy, but right action was the purifier of life, the one security for the heritages of civilization, the one great teacher of mankind. And to Mr. Ruskin, we cannot doubt, that fact becomes clearer day by day. His sense of its truth, we cannot doubt, is evinced by the eagerness with which he rushes away from the field of art into that prosaic domain of political economy which formulates a series of the results that flow from the collective action of men. That sense, we cannot doubt, is revealed by his constant expressions of hunger for such a political and social revolution as would give England a Government paternal in its form and Roman in its strength: a Government which, in primitive fashion, should fuse the moralist and the legislator into one. However erroneous may be his political schemes, they are dictated by an instinct as true as it is noble, — the instinct that not beauty of form, or nobility of written sentiment, but right action, is the great regenerator of life; and seldom has that truth stood in greater need of eloquent enunciation than at the present time, when the wealth and idleness and barbaric thoughtlessness of England are threatening to find a refuge from real work in the emasculating dilettanteism of the studio.

From The Pall Mall Gazette.

THE PROSPECT OF GERMAN UNITY.

A LETTER which lately appeared in the *Times*, under the well-known initials of "M.M.," dated from Oxford, is one of some significance as an indication of German feeling in the present crisis of German destinies. He is replying to some remarks, at once courtly and military, of Colonel Loyd Lindsay, respecting the delicate distress in which English sentiment is placed between partiality for our French allies and allegiance to the Crown Princess of Prussia. He shows, with a few incisive words, how completely all these minor motives have been distanced, or rather effaced, for Germans at all events, by the terrible exigencies of the time. For Germany there is now only one question — that of unity. The unity of Germany — the dream of her wisest, the longing of her most de-

voted sons, the object of as earnest and disinterested prayers as ever were poured forth for any purpose of this world — is now at hand. It is more than at hand — it is at the door. Difficulties, intrigues, jealousies, have vanished like dreams of the night before the resolution of a people stirred up, happily for itself, by foreign aggression. The great step forward has been taken; and that step cannot be retraced. French victory might retard the mechanical operation of the change, by imposing terms of peace incompatible with political union: but it could not destroy the national union once effected: and the national union, after some further period of probation, must bring about the political. To those who cherish aspirations like these, controversies about the relative morality of Napoleon and Bismarck, or the meaning of the Treaty of Prague, or declamations about Prussian ambition, are really altogether out of place. They are beside the mark — by-currents, swallowed up in the mighty flood which is now setting in one direction with concentrated and irresistible energy. We may call this the language of enthusiasts, if we please. But enthusiasts such as these have shaped the course of European events more than once; in 1789, and again in 1814; and it has been one great misfortune of statesmen — especially, perhaps, of English statesmen — that they could rarely comprehend the force of popular enthusiasm, or the control of public affairs by any stronger springs than those of dynastic intrigues or calculations of expediency.

If we British are rendered a little dull in divining the tendencies of things, partly from phlegmatic habits and partly from un-readiness to enter fully into the mind of foreign nations, the judgment of French observers is far more distorted by their own antipathies and prejudices. The spirit of German unity is a thing they cannot understand, because they are determined not to understand it. And the consequence is that their best political writing on the great European question of the day seems antiquated as soon as it is published. They are months, or years, behind the clock. M. Victor Cherbuliez, a "publicist" of repute, has published a series of able articles on "*La Prusse et l'Allemagne*" in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*; and this is a point of knowledge at which M. Cherbuliez has arrived (with all a Frenchman's certitude) no longer ago than last April: —

Europe may be reassured by the fact that the interests of Germany are in accordance with her

own. If the Southern States, in a blind fit of *entrainement*, had consented to surrender themselves to Prussia without conditions, it was all over with Germany. And, supposing even that a majority in Wurtemberg and Bavaria had gone so far as to solicit the accession of these States to the Confederation of the North, the opposing minority would still be so numerous and formidable that Prussia, in order to hold the South, would have had to hold it for half a century under the dominion of the sabre — a sad result for Germany, for Europe, and for Prussia herself. . . . Would Europe really gain so much if a stroke of the pen were to suppress, together with Baden, Wurtemberg, and Bavaria, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, and Switzerland?

If M. Cherbuliez were to maintain that the decline of provincial cities and their practical absorption by Paris is an evil, probably some might agree with him. But if, disliking the tendency, he were to deny its existence, he would be looked on as a very paradoxical trifler. And yet the absorption of small States by large ones is as undoubted a tendency of the age as that of small cities and small industries, most of all when these small States are really only such in statistical description, but in truth only fractions of one great community with common language and laws. Local jealousies in Germany were rapidly tending to extinction before the present crisis; the war now commenced will crush out such vitality as they have left, and perhaps more effectually through defeat, should such be the upshot, than through victory. There is no centrifugal cause of any importance at work in Germany except difference of religion, which the Ultramontanes are, of course, endeavouring to make the most of. But even this is of less magnitude than at first sight might appear. Germany, it is commonly said, is divided between Catholics and Protestants in nearly equal numbers. But this calculation includes among Germans all the Slavonic subjects of Austria whose countries formed part of the old German Empire. Of Germans by race a considerable majority are Protestants; and the Catholics are scattered, preponderating in widely distant localities, at the extremities of the country — on the Rhine and under the shadow of the Bavarian and Austrian Alps. But, what is more important, religious feeling in Germany is too strongly impregnated with Liberalism to set itself in effective opposition to the general desire for political unity.

There are several lessons which European history very distinctly teaches on this great subject. One is, that a number of small States inhabited by people of the same race

and language have never failed of accomplishing consolidation if seriously determined on it. Another, that the opposition of foreign Powers has always tended in the long run to promote, and not to prevent, this consummation. And another, that, notwithstanding all the regrets of an over-refined school of politicians over the suppression of small realms and the little dynasties attached to them, union has always promoted the strength and prosperity, not only of the whole, but of the component parts. It was the great object of our Plantagenet Sovereigns, for a century, to prevent the consolidation of the feudal quasi-sovereignities which were then established on French soil. And the popular instinct of the English people was as adverse to that consolidation as that of the French has been in our time to the unity of Italy and of Germany. But English opposition only roused the French Spirit. Crecy and Agincourt gave birth to French patriotism. France was not France until England taught her to become so. And the result was the establishment of the most powerful of European monarchies in the place of a dozen quarrelsome principalities. The union of the crowns of Castile and Aragon followed in the next age. In the middle of the fifteenth century Spain was a geographical expression for the aggregate of four or five independent kingdoms. By the middle of the sixteenth, as Mr. Buckle points out with great force, united Spain was bidding high for absolute mastery over the West of Europe. Our own times have seen the latest, and in some respects the most remarkable, of these examples of the erection of large Powers out of the extinction of small ones. No axiom was more universally received among European statesmen than that the unity of Italy was impos-

sible. It was impossible because foreign Powers would not allow it; because Italian local jealousies would for ever prevent it; because, lastly, the geographical obstacles to such unity were insuperable. The First Napoleon, whose penetrating mind perceived the futility of the first two reasons, yielded to the force of the third. In a very remarkable chapter of his *Remains* he explains why Italy, from her configuration and position, cannot become one. But it was not given even to his sagacity to foresee the operation of steam and the telegraph. As soon as the time arrived, the apparently hopeless problem was solved at once. One man of genius set himself to accomplish it by force of statesmanship. Two or three dreamers of dreams, anathematized by the ruling classes of society, prepared the way for him by sowing the seed of Italian patriotism far and wide on soil hitherto occupied by the rank growth of provincial passions and intrigues. And the work was achieved, and an Italy created, almost before old-fashioned diplomacy had had time to turn round in its bed and prepare to greet the new phenomenon in official costume. One more chapter in history remains to be completed. German nationality has to be added to English, French, Spanish, Italian. The map of Western Europe will then be filled up. Whether that great union, first announced by German cannon at Wissembourg, is to be proclaimed by the same stern heralds at Paris, or whether its formal accomplishment is again to be delayed by defeat, the event, immediate or not, is on all human calculation certain. And it is equally certain that, whenever it takes place, it will be almost as great a blessing to Europe in general, and to jealous France herself, as to the future Germany.



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